TARBELL'S TEACHERS GUIDE

TO THE

INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

FOR 1906

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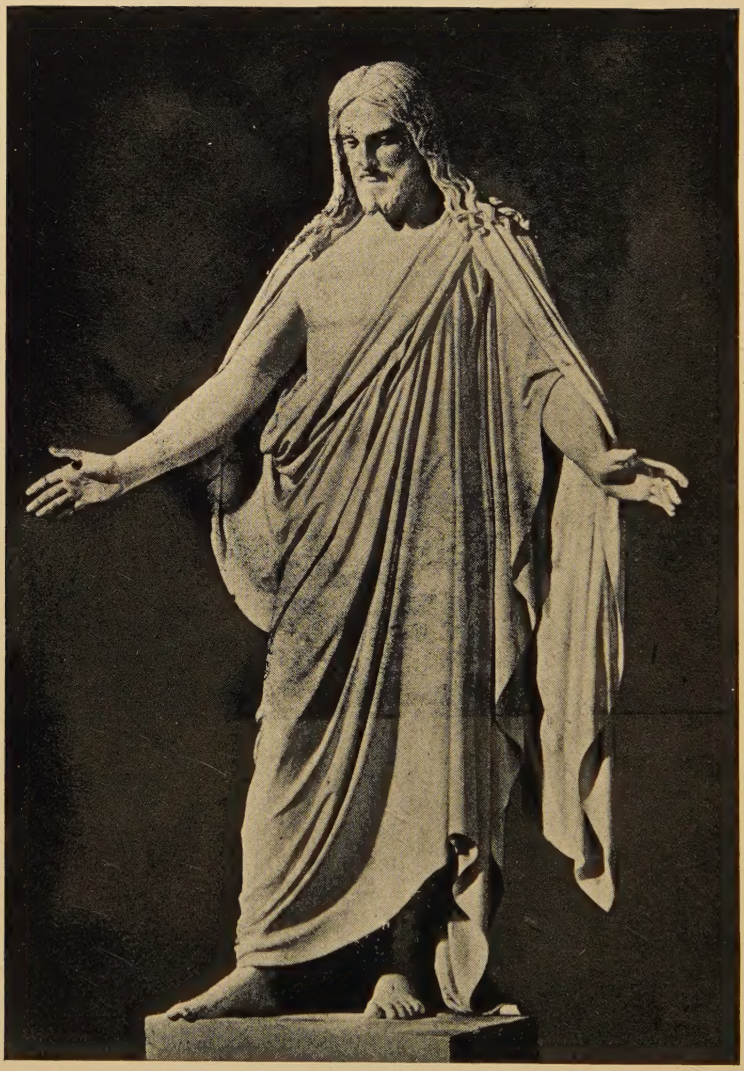

CHRIST

The Statue by Thorwaldsen

TARBELL'S TEACHERS' GUIDE

TO THE
INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY-SCHOOL LESSONS
FOR 1906

VI

MARTHA TARBELL, PH. D.

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The Bible Text. Words and Phrases Explained. Suggestive Thoughts from Helpful Writers. Light from Oriental Life.

Suggestions for Teaching the Lesson. Three Lesson Thoughts with Illustrations. Sentence Sermons. The Bible Its Own Interpreter.

The Personal Thought. The Lesson Summary. Subjects for Bible Class Discussion. Work to be Assigned.

An Outline of the Life of Christ. The Purpose and Authorship of the Gospels. The Geography of Palestine. Maps, Diagrams and Pictures.

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TARBELL'S TEACHERS' GUIDE

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS

"Children, what shall I talk to you about?" questioned a young man who was called upon unexpectedly to address a Sunday-school. "What do you know?" piped a shrill voice in answer. The Sunday-school teacher needs to know much more than he teaches. He needs to be ready for the surprising questions which sometimes come to him. While he will not tell a pupil what he can get that pupil to tell him by skilful questioning, he needs to be ready to impart knowledge which the pupil can not give him. He needs to know as much about the history, the geography, the connecting events, the life and customs, and all the various side-lights bearing upon the subject of the lesson to be taught, as does the day school-teacher about the subjects taught in the day school. It is the aim of this book, not only to explain the text and develop and illustrate the lesson thoughts, but to give this special information which teachers have neither the time nor the opportunity to glean for themselves from a multitude of books.

The Geography of the Lessons. A treatment of the geography of Palestine is given in the back part of the book. It is believed that these pages contain all the geographical knowledge essential to a perfect understanding of the life and times of Christ. The geography is apportioned to the lessons by paragraphs, so that by spending a short time each week, classes can complete the subject in the course of the year. References are also given with each lesson to the places especially connected with that lesson.

Words and Phrases Explained. Every teacher must know the meaning of the words of the Bible text and the correct interpretation of the thoughts of the lesson. How much of this knowledge he will impart to his class will depend upon the age of his pupils.

Suggestive Thoughts from Helpful Writers. These selections, almost all of them from noted essayists, preachers, teachers, or poets, touch upon the lesson from broad and thoughtful viewpoints.

Light from Oriental Life. "To interpret Scripture aright," says a great English preacher, "it is necessary to find the way back into the temper and tone, into the habit of life and thought, of the people to whom the words were addressed." Pupils are greatly interested in everything about the life and customs of the people of Palestine which throws light on the lessons and makes the personality of Christ more real to them, and very often the lesson can not be understood without the help of this side-light on it.

The Approach to the Lesson. Do not begin the lesson period

by marking the class record and taking the collection. Your pupils will meanwhile be talking, and it will be difficult to gain their attention afterwards. Let some pupil do this work for you, if you have one who is old enough, or mark the record during the singing before the class period, and take the collection as quickly as possible when you first meet your class for the lesson study. Two suggestions for beginning the lesson so as to gain attention at the start are given with each lesson. Vary your introductions as much as possible; sometimes the best introduction will be a review of the previous lesson, or a talk about the intervening events, and sometimes striking questions will arouse interest. Do not leave to the spur of the moment the mode of entering upon your subject, but carefully prepare this, as well as the other parts of the lesson, in advance.

Lesson Thoughts and Illustrations. The attention of pupils of all ages can be held better, their thoughts aroused and their lives inspired in a greater and more lasting degree, by the presentation of one great central truth of the lesson, enforced and made real by fitting illustrations, than is possible by merely taking up and discussing the lesson verse by verse. The Bible was not written in verses nor yet in chapters. The division of the New Testament into verses was not made till 1554, nearly fifteen centuries after the books were written. The divisions are useful for reference, but a too close observance of these divisions obscures alike the meaning and the beauty of the lesson whole.

There are many lesson truths taught or suggested by each lesson text. Three truths are presented in the treatment of each lesson, but of course no teacher will attempt to impress all of them on his class. Nor will he make use of all the suggestions and illustrations given with each lesson truth. Many illustrations are given that each teacher may find here something especially adapted to his own class. He will be guided in his selection by the age and comprehension, the special interests and needs, of his pupils. In lesson one, for example, older classes will be more interested and helped by a discussion of "The Mystery of Christ's Divinity and Humanity," than by the thought, which has become very familiar to them, of the "Good Tidings of Great Joy." The second topic will be the one for young pupils, while the third topic, "On earth peace, good-will to men," is for those pupils not thoughtful enough to be interested in the first topic, and already too familiar with the second.

Doctor G. Stanley Hall, President of Clark University, is authority for this statement: "Of all the things that a teacher should know how to do, the most important, without any exception, is to be able to tell a story." An abstract truth or a logical argument appeals to the reason alone, and can not be grasped by pupils, or if grasped, can not be remembered, but when the same truth is "embodied in a tale" the story and the truth both will be remembered.

"Leaving out for the present the language of symbol and illustration

which Christ spoke," says Professor Drummond, "there is no great truth in our Bible that is not borne to us upon some material image. . . . It never uses the word irrevocable. It speaks of water spilt on the ground that can not be gathered up again—a thread cut by the weaver. Nor does it tell us that life is evanescent. It suggests evanescent things—a dream, a sleep, a shadow, a shepherd's tent removed. The Bible in these instances is not trying to be poetical: it is simply trying to be true. And it distinctly, unconsciously recognizes the fact that truth can only be borne into the soul through the medium of things."

Jesus again and again used stories—parables—to illustrate and enforce His teaching, but He never told a story simply for the story's sake. An illustration which does not really illustrate the lesson thought, which diverts attention from the lesson thought to the story itself, is worse than useless.

Sentence Sermons. Before the lesson period, write upon your blackboard, or, better still, let one of your pupils write, one or two of the sentence sermons which are best suited to the understanding and appreciation as well as profit of your class. Lessons taught through the eye often make a greater impression than those taught through the ear. Our experience has been that pupils of their own accord will bring to class paper and pencils in order to copy such sentences and commit them to memory. A small blackboard, perhaps two by three feet — a square of blackboard cloth mounted — can easily be secured if you are not fortunate enough to have a larger one for your use, or even a large pad of paper can be made to answer the purpose.

The Bible its Own Interpreter. The lesson period is too short to spend any portion of it in looking up passages of Scripture. Like the "Sentence Sermons," one of these Golden Texts may be written upon the board. The Bible references may be given to pupils the week before to look up, and pupils may be encouraged to find for themselves Bible texts especially appropriate for each lesson.

The Personal Thought. "Empty moralizing" is even more harmful than "vapory generalizing." "There are four elements of successful teaching," as given by Jenkin Lloyd Jones, "the power of imparting information, the power of holding attention, the power of making an impression, and the power of moving to action." To give the first three of these has been the purpose of the topics already discussed, to give the fourth is the purpose of "The Personal Thought." The practical lesson, which has a bearing upon the conduct or spiritual growth of pupils, the earnest, sincere teacher will bring out in the course of his teaching or at its close. The comment of an Orkney whaleman on a sermon is said to have been, "It was varra guid, only there was nae harpoons in it."

The Lesson Summary. A teacher once said that he was always so eager to impress his pupils with some important thought that he did

this early in the lesson period and after that was "all at sea." A good beginning is essential, but even more essential is a good ending. The effect that you wish to produce, the impression that you wish to make lasting, will probably be lost if you spend the last five or ten minutes in unprofitable discussions, in bringing up minor details, or, worse still, in "talking about something else." The teacher should so plan his lesson that he is sure, not only of the manner of approach, but of the development of the lesson, and the manner of closing. There will not be time to say all that you wish to say. Much must be left unsaid, but do not omit your carefully thought-out closing, whether a heart-to-heart talk, a "harpoon" that will inspire the lives of your pupils through the coming week, or a summary of the lesson, or a review.

Subjects for Bible Class Discussion. A subject announced a week in advance, and closely adhered to in class, no matter how some minds may wish to wander, will bring unwonted interest to adult classes that are very familiar with the Gospels. The first part of the lesson period may profitably be given in any Bible Class to talks upon the geography of Palestine, the life and customs of the people which illuminate the lesson, and a connected, progressive view of Christ's words and works, and the latter part of the period to a special topic suggested by the lesson text.

Work to be Assigned. You may urge your pupil to study next Sunday's lesson, and he will not give your words a second thought, but give him something definite to do, something that interests him and that he is capable of doing, and he will do it. In the questions given with each lesson the object has been to familiarize the pupils with the use of the Bible itself, and to stimulate thought on their part. The questions may be given to the entire class — such of the questions as are suitable for it — or they may be written upon slips of paper and given to a few pupils. The teacher himself can best prepare his own questions.

Between the Lessons. The lessons for the entire year are on the Life of Christ, and an opportunity is thus given for all classes, of whatever age, to secure as a permanent possession a vividly real knowledge of the personality of Christ and of His life and teachings as a whole. Just as the mere study of verse after verse of each day's lesson leaves no definite lesson or thought on the mind, so the study of lesson after lesson, with no study of their connection, the one with the other, or of their part in Christ's life as a whole, will leave but a series of detached thoughts. "Suppose that a reader had ever on his tongue some of the most brilliant lines of *Hamlet* or *King Lear,* but had never studied as wholes those immortal plays," questions Canon Farrar, "should we say that such a reader knew the mind of Shakespeare? Yet thousands of Christians treat the Bible in this way." Whatever your pupils may learn, most important of all their knowledge will be this complete view of Christ's life.

THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS

Why Called Synoptic. The word *Gospel* is derived from the two Anglo-Saxon words *god,* meaning good, and *spell,* meaning tidings or history: god-spell, gospel, good tidings. The four writers of the Gospels are called Evangelists, from a Greek word meaning the bringer of good tidings. The first three Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, are called the Synoptists, and their writings the Synoptic Gospels, because, unlike John, they give a synopsis of Christ's life. The word *synopsis* is from two Greek words meaning a view together, a collective view. The Gospels according to St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke may be viewed together. They present a view of Christ's life which may be tabulated, given in a synopsis, while the Gospel according to St. John stands in a class by itself.

The Synoptic Gospels have many striking similarities, and equally striking is their difference from John's Gospel. The Synoptists narrate chiefly Christ's ministry in Galilee; John, His ministry in Judea: the Synoptists narrate His miracles, parables, and addresses to the multitudes, John narrates His deeper and more abstract discourses, His conversations and prayers: the Synoptists portray Christ in action, John portrays Him in meditation.

The Writers of the Synoptic Gospels. When we say that the Bible is inspired, we do not mean that the Bible books themselves are inspired, but that the writers of the books were inspired by God for their writing. The "holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Pet. 1.21.)

The Gospels were written in Greek. Matthew was an apostle and a companion of Christ during His ministry; Mark and Luke were companions of Apostles, and they record the statements of others who were witnesses of the facts they narrate. Mark was the chosen companion of Peter, Luke was the friend of Paul. Matthew and Mark were Hebrews, Luke was a Gentile. Matthew wrote for the Jews, Mark for the Romans, Luke for the Greeks.

Matthew was also called Levi, and his father's name was Alphæus. (Mark 2.14.) The Gospels tell us only of his being called by Jesus from his tax-gathering (he was a despised publican) to become one of His twelve disciples, and of his giving a feast to Jesus. (Matt. 9.9, 10; Mark 2.14, 15; Luke 5.27-29.)

Mark was also called John. He was the son of a certain Mary whose house at Jerusalem was the meeting place of the early Christians. (Acts 12.12.) He was a nephew of Barnabas (Col. 4.10) and his "spiritual father" was Peter (1 Pet. 5.13). It is generally believed that he was "the certain young man" who followed Jesus after His arrest in Gethsemane. (Mark 14.51, 52.)

Mark went with Paul and Barnabas as a "minister," or attendant, from

Jerusalem to Antioch (Acts 12.25) and from Antioch to Perga (Acts 13.5, 13). At Perga he "departed from them . . . and went not with them to the work;" why, we are not told, but we know that Paul did not feel friendly toward him on account of this desertion. (Acts 15.30-40.) Paul "thought it not good" to take Mark with them on a later journey, Barnabas would not go without him, and "a sharp contention arose between the apostles." Mark "sailed unto Cyprus" with Barnabas. (Acts 15.39.) Col. 4.10, 11 and 2 Tim. 4.11 tell us that years afterward Mark was with Paul at Rome on the friendliest terms. We know also that Mark went with Peter on a missionary journey to Babylon (1 Pet. 5.13), and later came to Rome, probably in company with Peter.

Luke, we know, was a physician. His name occurs only in Col. 4.14, Philemon 24, and 2 Tim. 4.11. "St. Luke was a physician," says St. Jerome, "and so, to all, his words are medicine to the drooping soul." He joined Paul at Troas on his second missionary journey, and was afterward his companion and helper in his troubles and imprisonments.

Unity and Diversity of the Gospels. St. Augustine says the Gospels "are various, not contrary." "If four witnesses should appear before a judge to give an account of a certain event," says Doctor Henry van Dyke in *The Open Door,* "and each one should tell exactly the same story in the same words, the judge would probably conclude, not that their testimony was exceptionally valuable, but that the only event which was certain beyond a doubt was that they had agreed to tell the same story. But if each man told what he had seen, as he had seen it, then the evidence would be credible. And when we read the four Gospels, is not that exactly what we find? The four men tell the same story, each in his own way."

Chronology. No one of the Gospels aims to give a chronological biography of Jesus. John arranges events in chronological order, but he omits much. Matthew often connects a story with the teaching it illustrates, even though he thus gives events out of their order of occurrence. He collects Christ's discourses, notably in the Sermon on the Mount, while in Luke's Gospel there is no consecutive teaching, but "the Son of Man speaks as occasion demands." "Of some eighty-three paragraphs which the Synoptists have in common," says G. H. Gilbert in his *Student's Life of Jesus,* "only about thirty-four come in the same order in all three narratives—that is to say, in some forty-nine instances the Synoptists do not agree in the order of their narratives." "Matthew," says Doctor Frederick Godet, "groups together doctrinal teachings in the form of great discourses; he is the preacher. Mark narrates events as they occur to his mind; he is the chronicler. Luke represents the external and internal development of events; he is the historian properly so called."

Date of Writing. The Gospels are placed first in the New Testa-

ment, but the Epistles were written earlier. Paul's letters were read in the churches before the Gospels were circulated. It is generally believed that the Synoptic Gospels were written within forty years after the death of Christ (before the destruction of Jerusalem in A. D. 70), and St. John's Gospel within fifty years of His death, but the date of no one of them can be given conclusively.

Common Source. When the Synoptists give parallel accounts of the same event, the similarity of words is striking. This proves either that they had a common written or oral source, or that one wrote from the other. There are about three hundred and thirty verses common to all the Synoptists.

The Gospel According to St. Matthew. Matthew's special purpose in writing his Gospel was to prove to the Jews that Jesus was their long-expected Messiah, the Son of David, that His life fulfilled Old Testament prophecy. Thirteen times he says that this or that happened "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet." There are sixty-five quotations in his Gospel from the Old Testament.

One fourth of Matthew's Gospel consists of the words of Jesus. He gives more fully than the others His teaching concerning the kingdom. He presents five great continuous discourses: the Sermon on the Mount (chaps. 5-7); the address to His disciples when He sent them forth as His messengers (chap. 10); the seven parables that illustrate the Kingdom of Heaven (chap. 13); the discourse on the Church (chap. 18); and the discourse on the Judgment (chaps. 23-25). "All these discourses," says Canon Farrar, "dwell on the work of the Messiah, the Messiah of the ancient people, as Lawgiver, as Judge, and as King. The Gospel of St. Matthew was, then, as it has been called, the ultimatum of Jehovah to the ancient people: 'Recognize Jesus as your Messiah, or accept Him as your Judge!'"

Matthew alone has told us about the visit of the wise men to the Infant Jesus, the massacre of the innocents, the flight into Egypt, and the return to Nazareth. We are indebted to him for many of Christ's parables—the wise and foolish builders, the tares, the leaven, the treasure, the net, the unmerciful servant, the laborers in the vineyard, the two sons in the vineyard, the wicked husbandmen, the marriage of the king's son, the ten virgins, the talents. His Gospel is "a mighty, because a simply truthful record of the words and deeds of Him who was both God and man."

The Gospel According to St. Mark. Justin Martyr (A.D. 100-120) calls the Gospel of Mark "the Memoirs of Peter," and Tertullian, about a century later, says that the Gospel of Mark "may be ascribed to Peter, whose interpreter (scribe) Mark was."

It is the shortest of the four Gospels; in many respects it is meager. It gives no long discourses, and has fewer of Christ's teachings than the other Gospels. It begins with the inauguration of Christ's ministry.

Mark's purpose was to portray Christ as the Son of God. He is more intent upon recording the deeds than the words of Christ. He often tells the effect Christ's personality made on the people, their astonishment at His miracles and teaching. He brings out clearly the popularity of Christ, then the growing opposition of the Pharisees, and he shows how events foreshadowed the end, and how Christ sought to prepare His disciples for His coming death.

"Immediately" is a characteristic word of Mark's Gospel. In the Revised Version it occurs forty times; in the Authorized Version the one Greek word is variously translated—immediately, straightway, forthwith, by and by, anon, as soon as, shortly. The word-picturing in his Gospel is always vivid, for details and realistic touches are added. Straightforwardness, simplicity, and vigor characterize the whole Gospel.

The Gospel According to St. Luke. "Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order," says Luke in the preface to his Gospel. We naturally infer that he had for information the versions of the Gospel already written, and also oral tradition and his memory of talks with the apostles. He proposes to give a complete and orderly picture of Christ's life as shown by His words and works. His special purpose was to prove to his own countrymen, the Greeks, that Jesus is the friend of man, the Saviour, not only of the Jews, but of the whole world. "The key-note of his Gospel," says Canon Farrar, "is 'the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.'"

Luke was also the writer of the Book of the Acts, and his Gospel is "the first volume of a great narrative which traces the victorious advance of Christianity from Galilee to Jerusalem and from Jerusalem to Rome."

Luke's Gospel is the longest book in the New Testament. It is two-thirds longer than Mark's and one-tenth longer than Matthew's. His is the Gospel of the infancy and youth of Jesus. He alone gives the account of the forerunner's birth, the presentation in the temple, the visit of the shepherds, the journey of Jesus to Jerusalem at the age of twelve. To him we are indebted for the parables of the Good Samaritan, the friend at midnight, the rich fool, the great supper, the builder of the tower, the king going to war, the lost sheep, the lost coin, the prodigal son, the unjust steward, the rich man and Lazarus, the unprofitable servant, the importunate widow, the Pharisee and Publican, the pounds. Most of the narrative from 9.51 to 18.14 is peculiar to Luke.

"From the purely literary and humanitarian standpoint," says Renan, "Luke's Gospel is the most beautiful book ever written."

THE LIFE OF CHRIST

Part I. The Thirty Years of Private Life: from the birth of Jesus to the coming of John the Baptist, B. C. 5–A. D. 26.

Part II. The Preparation for the Public Ministry: from the coming of John the Baptist to the public appearance of Jesus in Jerusalem, summer A. D. 26–April A. D. 27.

Part III. The early Judean Ministry: from the public appearance of Jesus in Jerusalem to the return to Galilee April A. D. 27–December A. D. 27.

Part IV. The First Period of the Galilean Ministry: from the return to Galilee to the choosing of the Twelve, December A. D. 27–May (?) A. D. 28.

Part V. The Second Period of the Galilean Ministry: from the choosing of the Twelve to the withdrawal into Northern Galilee, May (?) A. D. 28–Summer, A. D. 29.

Part VI. The Third Period of the Galilean Ministry: from the withdrawal into Northern Galilee to the final departure from Galilee, summer A. D. 29–November A. D. 29.

Part VII. The Perean Ministry: from the final departure from Galilee to the final arrival at Jerusalem, November A. D. 29–April 2, A. D. 30.

Part VIII. The Passion Week (Week of Suffering): from the final arrival in Jerusalem to the Resurrection, April 2–April 9, A. D. 30.

Part IX. The Forty Days: from the Resurrection to the Ascension, April 9–May 18, A. D. 30.

LESSONS FOR 1906

WORDS AND WORKS OF JESUS AS RECORDED IN THE GOSPELS ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW, ST. MARK AND ST. LUKE

FIRST QUARTER

LESSON I—JANUARY 7

THE SHEPHERDS FIND JESUS

Luke 2.1-20. (Read Matt. 1.1-25; Luke 1.1-80.) Commit vv. 13, 14.

Golden Text

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. Luke 2.11.

Time: B. C. 5.
Place: Bethlehem. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 1–4 and 90.

THE DATE OF CHRIST'S BIRTH

It came to pass in those days, says Luke,—those days when *there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus that all the world should be taxed,*—that Mary *brought forth her firstborn son. Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king,* says Matthew, while Mark and John are silent as to the time of His birth. Throughout the Scriptures, the chronology is similarly indefinite. This is because the writers were Orientals, and Orientals then, as now, thought of time by periods, rather than by the exact number of days as we of the Western world think.

Until the sixth century A. D., time was reckoned from the beginning of the world (A. M., *Anno Mundi*) or from the year of Rome (U. C., *Urbe Condita*). In the sixth century A. D., the task of computing the birth of Jesus so as to make a new reckoning from that date, was given to a learned monk, Dionysius Exiguus. It has since been discovered that he made a mistake, and that Jesus was born four years (and one week, if we accept December twenty-fifth as the day) before the year which Dionysius called A. D. 1. In January A. D. 2, Jesus was five years old; in January A. D. 3, Jesus was six years old: thus we must always add three years to the date of any event to determine His age at that time.

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While Easter has been observed from the earliest times, Christmas was not celebrated in the Church until after the middle of the fourth century. The date December twenty-fifth rested on a tradition of the Roman Church. "It seems to have been substituted," says Doctor Riddle, "for a series of heathen festivals. It may have been selected for poetic and symbolic fitness. At that season the longest night gives way to the returning sun on his triumphal march, just as Christ appeared in the darkest night of sin and error as the true Light of the World."

LESSON TEXT. LUKE 2.1-20.

1 And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.
2 (*And* this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)
3 And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.
4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)
5 To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.
6 And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.
7 And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.
8 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.
9 And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.
10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.
11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.
12 And this *shall be* a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.
13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,
14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.
15 And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.
16 And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.
17 And when they had seen *it*, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.
18 And all they that heard *it* wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.
19 But Mary kept all these things, and pondered *them* in her heart.
20 And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *Cæsar Augustus* reigned from 30 B. C. to 14 A. D. *All the world, i. e.,* the Roman Empire. *Should be taxed.* R. V., *enrolled.* Such an enrolment was like a modern census; but as the ultimate purpose was taxation, there was a record of property. *Riddle.*

2. *When Cyrenius was governor of Syria.* Josephus places the date when Cyrenius, or Quirinius, became governor of Syria, eight years after the birth of Christ, and Luke refers in Acts 5.37 to "the days of the taxing," which was a more noted enrolment under Quirinius than the one mentioned in this second verse. It is readily believable that Quirinius was twice governor of Syria.

3. *All.* All in Palestine. *To be taxed.* R. V., *to be enrolled. Into his own city.* The town to which the village or place of his birth belonged, and where the house and lineage of each was registered. *Vincent.*

4. *Lineage of David.* R. V., *family of David.*

9. *The glory of the Lord shone round about them,* a reminder of the Shechinah, or cloud of overwhelming brightness, which was to the Israelites a visible sign of God's presence in the Tabernacle.

11. *The city of David.* It never ceased to glory in the fact that it had been David's city. *Plumptre. A Saviour which is Christ the Lord.* The word *Christ* (χριστός, from χρίω, I anoint) is the Greek word, as *Messiah* is the Hebrew word, for Anointed, the Anointed One. By the pouring of consecrated oil upon the heads of priests and kings they were anointed or consecrated for their office.

14. *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.* R. V., *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men of His good pleasure.* The form is that of Hebrew parallelism, in two lines, with a three-fold correspondence: "glory"—"peace"; "in the highest"—"on earth"; "God"—"among men of His good pleasure." *Riddle. On earth peace.* This exclamation is not a wish, but far stronger,—a triumphal assertion of the existing blessed state of things. *Meyer.*

17. *They made known abroad.* The fact must be borne in mind, as tending to the agitation which reached its height on the arrival of the Magi in Jerusalem. *Plumptre.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

1. *There went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus.* One great lesson for life that the manger-cradle teaches us is, that love is mightier than power. The central man of the time, when Jesus lay in the cradle, was the Emperor Augustus. His word was law.

But where now is the power of Augustus? Time has shattered it. The name at which the nations trembled carries no more authority. But the Babe in the manger-cradle is more and more ruling the ages. Not

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waning is He, but waxing, because He is utmost proof and instance of the limitless, sacrificial love. *Wayland Hoyt.*

3. *Every one to his own city.* This was not the Roman custom, but was probably adopted as a measure of policy in accordance with the Jewish habits in regard to genealogies. Roman usage required the enrolment of women, and possibly their actual presence at the place of enrolment. *Matthew Riddle.*

4. *Joseph went from Nazareth to Bethlehem.* With us, a journey of eighty miles would mean no more than stepping on a railway car at nine o'clock in the morning and stepping off a few hours later. But with them it meant a journey on foot of several days. *James H. Snowden.*

10. *And the angel said unto them.* They were the first Christian congregation. That day an angel preached the sermon, and a choir of angels sang the anthem. They listened, these simple shepherds, standing amongst the sheep. Nobody else was there.

I believe that the obscurest preacher, setting forth, in halting speech, the blessed Christmas gospel, if his heart be filled with holy love for God and man, is as pleasing to the Eternal Father as the angel of the Lord was at the beginning; and the humblest chorus in the smallest church, singing out of time and tune a Christmas hymn with honest gratitude and joy, makes a sound as sweet to the ear of God as was ever heard when the morning stars sang together. *George Hodges.*

10. *I bring you good tidings of great joy.* These shepherds were Davids in their loftiness of thought, of hope and aspiration. Heaven's revelations come to noble minds, as the loftiest peaks are always the first to hail the dawn. And can we suppose that Heaven would so honor them, lighting up the sky with an aureole of glory for their sole benefit, sending this multitude to sing to them a sweet choral, if the men themselves had nothing heavenly about them, if their selfish, sordid minds could soar no higher than their flocks, and had no wider range than the markets for their wool? *Henry Burton.*

14. *On earth peace.* As the little country of Jewry was stirred on that day, so has the whole world since been stirred by the arrival of Jesus. No other birth has so profoundly affected human history or so changed the destiny of the human race. The light from that village-inn touches every idea and every movement through all the conquering nations of the world, and lights the church in her great mission unto every people. Beside His manger, all conditions stand on an equality, all enmities must be laid to rest. *John Watson.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

7. *Wrapped him in swaddling clothes.* After the manner of the East, then as now, these were fastened together round the whole body of the child, confining both legs and arms. *E. H. Plumptre.*

7. A manger. According to tradition, Christ was born in a cave near Bethlehem, above which the present Church of the Nativity has been built. Judea abounds in caves in the limestone rocks, and they were often used as stables.

7. There was no room for them in the inn. A Syrian *khan* (inn), where built by a great sheik, would have a high wall, an inner court, a range of arches or *lewans,* an open gallery round the four sides, and, in many cases, a tower from which the watcher might descry the approach of marauding bands. On one side of the square, but outside the wall, there is often a huddle of sheds, set apart from the main edifice as stables for the asses and camels, the buffaloes and goats. In the center of the *khan* springs a fountain of water, around which lies the gay and picturesque litter of the East. Each man has to carry his dinner and his bed; to litter his horse or camel; to draw his water; to light his fire; and to boil his mess of herbs. *Hepworth Dixon.*

Infant Wrapped in Swaddling Clothes

8. *Shepherds keeping watch over their flocks by night.* There was

An Oriental Khan

near Bethlehem, on the road to Jerusalem, a tower known as *Midgal Eder,* or the watch-tower of the flock. Here was the station where shepherds watched the flocks destined for sacrifice in the temple. Animals straying from Jerusalem on any side as far as from Jerusalem to *Midgal Eder,* were offered in sacrifice. It was a settled conviction among the

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Jews that the Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem, and equally that he was to be revealed from *Midgal Eder*. The beautiful significance of the revelation of the Infant Christ to shepherds watching the flocks destined for sacrifice needs no comment. *Marvin R. Vincent.*

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON.

For Younger Pupils. There is a fairy tale about a young shepherd to whom a good fairy gave a flute and promised that as he played and wished three times, his wishes should be granted. The boy played once and wished for riches, and a second time and wished for wisdom. Although now both rich and wise, he was not happy. He thought long about his last wish, and then as he played he said, "Let others be rich and happy." Then happiness came to him, for he had found it in the unselfish thought for others, in good-will to men.

This is the message which the angels brought when Jesus was born. What were their words as told in the fourteenth verse of our lesson? To whom were the words spoken? Where were the shepherds when they heard the angels?

For Older Pupils. All other holidays are national; Christmas alone is kept by the whole world. Each nation celebrates the birthdays of its own heroes and benefactors, but all nations and all ages celebrate the birthday of the great Benefactor of the human race, Jesus Christ. "To each of us the Child was born, and the world that was redeemed is our world," says Bliss Perry. "The merry greetings of Christmas morning are but symbols of that redemption. The children's happiness, the neighborly good-will, the generous deed, are at once memorials of that pure dawn of long ago, and prophecies of a day more perfect still."

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. The Mystery of Christ's Divinity and Humanity

We Should Rejoice that We Can not Understand Christ's Divinity and Humanity. Elizabeth McCracken in *The Outlook* says that a young High School pupil explained her fondness for algebra and geometry in this way: "I can solve a problem in mathematics, and that is the end of it. I know I have done all I can do, all I can ever do, because there isn't anything else to do; but no matter how much I study my Greek history lesson, I never finish studying it; I know there must be something else in it that I haven't got out." A few years later the girl again talked about her studies. "I still like mathematics," she said, "it is still a consolation to me; but, on the whole, I take more joy in the thought that I shall never get out of history all there is in it."

We can never understand how Christ was both God and man, and no matter how much we study God's revelations, we shall never find in

them all their message to us. When Mr. Webster was asked if he comprehended Christ's Divinity and humanity, he replied: "No, sir, I can not; and I should be ashamed to acknowledge Him as my Saviour if I could. If I could comprehend Him, He could be no greater than myself, and I need a superhuman Saviour."

An Illustration of the Incarnation. I do not know how to illustrate the incarnation. The only thing I ever thought of is very imperfect. You know how the coast line of the ocean runs from Maine to Cape Cod. Outside is the great ocean. What is inside those little curves? The ocean, of course. You call one the ocean, and the other the harbor or the bay, but it is all one ocean. The water is the same; it tastes the same, looks the same. Here is the great eternal God, filling all space, only in one place He flows into a little curve, Jesus of Nazareth, but it is the same God whether He is there in Heaven, or here in Jesus. Oh, I hope you don't understand this! It would be such a little thing if you and I understood it! *Alexander McKenzie.*

Why God Became Man. The most wonderful event in all the world's history was the Son of God becoming man. This happened when He was born as a Babe in Bethlehem. He came into the world that He might get nearer to the people, and tell them of God's love. A story is told of a Moravian missionary who went to the West Indies to preach to the slaves. But they were toiling all the day in the fields, and he could not get near to them. So he had himself sold as a slave and went among the other slaves, toiling with them in the fields, that he might tell them the story of God's love. This illustrates in a way what Christ did. *J. R. Miller.*

The Incarnation a Mystery of Boundless Love. If God had filled space and time with inanimate worlds, that would have revealed only power and skill; if He had filled the world with pleasure-giving contrivances, that would have revealed benevolence; if He had sent us prophets and teachers at no real cost to Himself, that, too, would be something, but it would not greatly stir our hearts toward God. Our love would go out to the prophets and teachers themselves, for the toil and the pain would fall on them. In all beneficence of this sort God would appear simply as a rich man, who, out of his abundance, scatters bounty to the needy, but at no cost to himself. And along this line, nothing higher is ever possible, and along this line God would for ever remain morally below the moral heroes of the race. Their gifts cost. They put themselves and their hearts into their work. They attain to the morality of self-sacrifice, and this is infinitely beyond the morality of any giving that does not cost. And there must ever be a higher moral possibility until we reach the revelation of God in self-sacrifice, until God becomes the chief of burden-bearers and the leader of all in self-abnegation. *Borden P. Bowne.*

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II. Good Tidings of Great Joy

Christians Should be Joyous. Edwin Arnold says in *The Light of the World,*

> "Oh, good friend! that soul
> Hath done with sadness, which knows Christ aright."

This was evidently the thought of "Little Broomstick," as told in the following story: "A poor little street girl was taken sick one Christmas and carried to the hospital. While there she heard the story of Jesus coming into the world to save us. One day Little Broomstick (that was her street name) whispered to the nurse: 'I'm havin' real good times here—ever such good times! S'pose I'll have to go 'way from here just as soon as I get well; but I'll take the good time along—some of it, anyhow. Did you know about Jesus bein' born?'

"'Yes,' replied the nurse; 'I know. Sh-sh-sh! Don't talk any more.'

"'You did? I thought you looked as if you didn't, and I was going to tell you.'

"'Why, how did I look?' asked the nurse, forgetting her own order in her curiosity.

"'Oh, just like most o' folks—kind o' glum. I shouldn't think you'd ever look glum, if you knew about Jesus bein' born.'" *Faith and Works.*

No Life too Miserable for Joyous Service. "Several years ago," so runs a true story in a number of *Forward,* "a Chinese woman brought a slave girl to a mission hospital in Canton. The girl was blind, and was growing lame, and her owner, fearing that she would become valueless, wanted the missionaries to cure her. The doctors said that not only was the blindness incurable, but that it would be necessary to amputate a leg. On learning this, the owner left the slave on the hands of the mission.

"The amputation was successfully performed and when the girl was well again, the missionaries gave her light work to do about the place. But the poor cripple's troubles were not yet over. She developed leprosy, and as required by the law, was sent to a leper settlement.

"Blind, a cripple, a leper! Yet there is one more thing to be told of her. During her life at the hospital she had become a happy Christian. In two years that blind cripple had built up a band of Christians in the leper settlement, and other leper villages were sending to ask about the wonderful good news that could bring joy even to outcasts. In five years a church had grown out of her work, and now a hospital is being planned. That poor, crippled life is to-day a center of joy and service."

Joy is a Flower that Springs from Roots. We have no more right to pray for joy, if we are not doing the things that Jesus said would

bring it, than we would have to ask interest in a savings bank in which we had never deposited money. We can not say that joy is like a fine complexion, a distinct addition to the charm of a face which yet would be structurally perfect without this charm. Joy is a feature, and the face that does not have it is disfigured. The Christian life that is joyless is a discredit to God, and a disgrace to itself. "These things have I spoken to you," said Jesus, "that my joy might remain with you, and that your joy might be full." Study these words. Believe them. Attempt them. Accomplish them. *Maltbie D. Babcock.*

O Brother mine of birth Divine,
Upon this natal day of Thine
Bear with our stress of happiness,
Nor count our reverence the less
Because with glee and jubilee
Our hearts go singing up to Thee.

James Whitcomb Riley.

III. On Earth Peace, Good-Will Toward Men

The Cost of War. "It has been estimated," says a recent writer, "that if Europe were to-day in a savage state, and had to begin to-morrow her civilization, her present war expenses would, in a comparatively few years, be sufficient to enable her to provide all her existing structures of civilization—schools, universities, churches, courthouses, lighthouses, roads, railways, canals, hospitals, asylums, etc. The world itself could be supplied with all the great essentials of civilization, in a few generations, by the funds now wrung by war taxation from the hard industries of the masses. What madness is this! How long shall humanity endure it?"

The Christ of the Andes. For generations the two South American republics of Argentine and Chile quarreled, and at times fought, over the location of a boundary. Now on a peak of the Andes Mountains, upon the boundary line established between the two countries, three miles above the level of the ocean, a colossal statue of Christ has been erected. The figure is twenty-six feet high, and stands upon a granite hemisphere. Upon the pedestal, this inscription (in Spanish) has been cut: "The mountains will crumble to dust ere Argentines and Chileans break the peace which, at the feet of Christ, the Redeemer, they have sworn to keep."

The Best Choice. Wang Su shows us Confucius with three of his disciples on a hill top. While they are enjoying the boundless prospect, he says to them: "Here our thoughts fly unfettered in all directions. Here you may give wings to fancy, and clothe your wildest dreams in words. Now, let each of you name the situation, or achievement, that would completely fill the measure of his ambitions."

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Tze Lu declares for feats of prowess, choosing above all things to be able with a small force to humble a proud foe; and with his own hand to capture the leader of the opposing camp. Tze Kung, the finest talker of the school, bent on proving the tongue mightier than the sword, enlarging on his friend's picture of opposing armies ready to join in bloody conflict, adds that it would be his ambition to come between the hostile camps, to disarm them both by mere force of argument, showing each his true interest, and by skilful diplomacy to bring about an adjustment of their differences. "I should wish," he says, "no higher glory than that of such a peaceful victory."

Confucius commends his eloquence, and then calls on Yen Hui, his favorite disciple, the St. John of his school. With modesty, Yen declines to engage in competition with his arrogant companions, but, urged by the Master he says: "My desire would be to find a good Prince, who would accept me for his Vizier. I would teach his people justice, propriety, and benevolence; and lead them no longer to build walls, or dig moats, but to turn their weapons of war into instruments of husbandry."

"Admirable," exclaimed Confucius, "such is the power of virtue." *W. A. P. Martin.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

No man can comprehend God—all men may apprehend Him. *Samuel L. Phillips.*

A God who could be explained would not be God, and a man who could explain God would not be man. *Carl Hilty.*

As no proof beside the light is necessary to show that the sun shines, so we shall find that Jesus proves Himself by His own self-evidence. *Horace Bushnell.*

The birth of Christ was greeted by celestial choirs with the Gloria in Excelsis; the hunger of Christ was appeased by ministering angels in the wilderness of temptation; the agony of Christ was abated by messengers of God in the Garden of Gethsemane; the resurrection of Christ was announced by angels in shining garments at the sacred sepulcher.

All that I think, all that I hope, all that I write, all that I live for, is based upon the divinity of Jesus Christ, the central joy of my poor, wayward life. *Gladstone.*

To live but one day in good-will to all men is to anticipate and hasten that day when all men shall live in good-will. *Bliss Perry.*

So simple was the Christmas sermon that the peasant congregation understood it, every word; yet so profound that we to-day, after all these centuries of prayer and study, have not learned the last of its great meaning. *George Hodges.*

To make us the sons of God, possessors of all that is strong and beautiful in the visible creation, heirs of all that is bright and glorious in the

hopes of Immortality and Heaven, God sent His Son. *F. W. Farrar.*

More and more we are learning that the Christian life is to be an incarnation, a realization of divine purpose, presence, communion, in our every-day occupation. *George Albert Coe.*

There is for each of us an advent, if we will accept it; for what is regeneration but the beginning of the divine life within our life, the advent of the Christ Himself? *Henry Burton.*

O holy Child of Bethlehem!
Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in,
Be born in us to-day.

Phillips Brooks.

Let us not sing of Christ's birth, but make of our hearts a birthplace for Him, cradle His spirit in us, watch it tenderly, and make it grow, till in our lives shall be ripe and rich fruit kindred to that which perfected in Him. *J. F. Ware.*

The Christmas child grew to be a man, and has been exalted above the heavens: the secret of His power over humanity is expressed in the angels' song, for He is what He is to the human heart because He embodied the spirit of good-will — the good-will of the All-Father towards His wayward children. *George C. Lorimer.*

The reason why we believe in the records of that miraculous birth is not only because they stand recorded by those who were far too feeble to have invented them, and of whom every one would have said, "I would rather die than lie"—but because, being so recorded, they have received the attestation of God Himself, seeing that the whole subsequent history seems to us to have set its seal to the belief that they are true. *F. W. Farrar.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. 1 John 4.9, 10.

His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Isa. 9.6.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. John 1.1, 2.

Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. Matt. 1.21.

I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father. John 16.28.

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For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. John 3.16.

For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich. 2 Cor. 8.9.

For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? And again, when he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him. Heb. 1.5, 6.

Also I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth. Psa. 89.27.

And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Phil. 2.11.

Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts. Ps. 148.2.

Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Rom. 5.1.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

It is only for thirty-six hours of the three hundred and sixty-five days that all people remember that they are all brothers and sisters, and those are the hours that we call, therefore, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. And when they always remember it, it will be Christmas all the time. *Edward Everett Hale.*

For somehow, not only at Christmas, but all the long year through,
The joy that you give to others, is the joy that comes back to you.
Whittier.

THE LESSON SUMMARY

"Christmas means," says Doctor Lyman Abbott, "that the King has left His palace to live in a house like that of His lowliest subjects, and has established Himself on terms of beautiful friendliness with me, using His riches and power to help me and fill my life with blessing."

The story of how the King came to earth at Bethlehem of Judea, of how the shepherds, who were keeping watch over their flocks by night, were led by a wonderful vision and marvelous message to go even to Bethlehem to see this thing which had come to pass, which the Lord had made known to them, and of how they found there Mary, and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger, and then returned glorifying and praising God —who does not know these good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people?

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Why Jesus came to earth.
2. The humiliation of Jesus.
3. The Hague Tribunal.
4. It is the voice of political wisdom that falls from the bells of Christmastide: Peace on earth, good-will to men. *David Starr Jordan.*
5. We never know when a great beginning may be happening. Next morning the noise and bustle broke out again in the inn yard; the citizens of Bethlehem went about their work; the registration proceeded; and in the meantime the greatest event in the history of the world had taken place. *James Stalker.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. From week to week write your own Life of Christ. Write each lesson in your own words, adding what you remember about the points brought out in class. 2. Read Luke 2.21-39. 3. Why was Jerusalem "troubled"? 4. What is the meaning of Herod's question in verse 4? 5. What prophet is quoted in the fifth verse? (Micah 5.1, 2). 6. Why did Herod inquire of the wise men when the star appeared? 7. What gifts did the Queen of Sheba bring to Solomon? (1 Kings 10.2). 8. When Jacob let his sons take Benjamin into Egypt, what presents did he send by them to Joseph, the governor? (Gen. 43.11).

BETWEEN LESSON I AND LESSON II

When "the Child" was eight days old, He was circumçised and named Jesus. At the end of the forty days, which by law must elapse between the birth of the child and the ceremonial purification of mother and child, Jesus was taken by Mary and Joseph to the temple "to be presented to the Lord." A sacrifice was offered of a pair of turtledoves, or of two young pigeons. There was in Jerusalem an aged and devout man named Simeon, to whom it had been revealed that he should not see death till he saw Christ. He was led by the Spirit to the temple, and seeing Jesus, he took Him in his arms and blessed Him, and broke forth into song:—

"Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace
According to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation,
Which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people,
A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel."

At that moment Anna, an aged prophetess, came in and gave thanks likewise unto the Lord. (Luke 2.21-38.)

LESSON II—JANUARY 14

THE WISE MEN FIND JESUS

Matt. 2.1-12. (Read Luke 2.21-39.) Commit v. 11.

Golden Text

My son, give me thine heart. Prov. 23.26.

Time: B. C. 4.
Place: Bethlehem. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 5-7, 59, and 90.

LESSON TEXT. MATTHEW 2.1-12

1 Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem.
2 Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.
3 When Herod the king had heard *these things,* he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.
4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.
5 And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judea: for thus it is written by the prophet,
6 And thou Bethlehem, *in* the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Judah: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.
7 Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared.
8 And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found *him,* bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.
9 When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.
10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.
11 And when they were come into the house they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.
12 And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *In the days of Herod the king.* Called Herod the Great: great in energy, in magnificence, in wickedness. *Bruce. Wise men.* The

Greek name, here translated wise men, is Magi. The Magi were a priestly class among the Medes, Persians, and Babylonians, famous for their knowledge of astronomy, medicine, philosophy, and religious mysteries.

2. *For we have seen his star in the east.* That is, the star that indicates Him. We are to think of a strange star that had not previously been seen by them, from the rising of which they had inferred the birth of the new King of the Jews, in accordance with their astrological rules. *Meyer.*

The star is to be considered as appearing contemporaneously with the birth. (v. 7.) But how long it was after the birth when the Magi came, is ascertained approximately from verse 16, according to which, even taking into account all the cruelty of Herod, and his intention to go to work with thorough certainty, the arrival of the Magi is most probably to be placed more than a year after the birth. *Meyer.* The time of the arrival of the wise men was probably after the Presentation in the Temple, more than forty days after the Nativity. *Plumptre.*

3. *And all Jerusalem with him.* Either: at the same time with him, or: because of him, knowing his cruelty. *Riddle.*

5. *By the prophet.* (Micah 5.1, 2.) It is here quoted with some changes of phraseology which may be readily explained. Micah used an antique name—*Bethlehem Ephratah.* Matthew takes the common Old Testament form, *Bethlehem Judah,* not the purely Greek form *Judea,* and prefixes "land," as when we say, "Richmond, State of Virginia." Micah says *Thou art little to be among the thousands of Judah (yet) out of thee;* etc. (R. V.), meaning that it is a small and insignificant place, scarcely worthy to be numbered among the towns of Judah—yet out of it would come, etc.; while Matthew turns toward the moral importance of Bethlehem, as derived from this very fact, and so he puts it, *art in no wise the least among the leaders of Judah, for out of thee,* R. V. "Thousands" was an antique designation of the great families into which the tribes were subdivided, and was applied by Micah to a town as a residence of such a family; while Matthew uses the more familiar term, "governors" or "princes," meaning those who by birth stood at the head of the great families, and might therefore represent them or their abode. *Broadus.*

7. *Inquired of them diligently.* Better, ascertained exactly. *Plumptre. What time the star appeared.* True to his nature to the last—himself probably a believer in astrology and haunted by fears of what the star portended—the king's next measure is to ascertain the limits of his danger. *Plumptre.* The question has its reason in this, that the mistrustful Herod already thinks of the possibility of his not seeing the Magi again, and that he will then still have a hold for taking further proceedings against the mysterious child. *Meyer.*

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8. *That I may come and worship him also.* It might well be at a secret conference with the Magi that Herod said this, for no Jew would have believed him. *Williams.*

10. *They rejoiced.* It is implied in this verse that the star, whose "rising" they had seen, had not been visible all the time, and its reappearance was to them unexpected.

11. *The house.* Probably not the place where Jesus was born, but temporary lodgings, in which they remained while the forty days of purification were accomplished. *Riddle. Frankincense and myrrh.* Aromatic gums.

12. *Being warned of God in a dream.* The Greek verb implies that the warning came in response to a question.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

1. *The days of Herod.* "At the time when the Magi arrived," says Geikie, in his *Life of Christ*, "Herod, now an old man, was sinking into the last stages of disease, but was still as jealous and afraid of attempts against his throne as ever. His steps were wet with the blood of his best-loved wife, his sons, his benefactors, and of the flower of the nation, murdered to make it secure. Like William the Conqueror, or Henry VIII, or Alexander the Great, or Nero, or Tiberius, his character had grown darker in his later years, and now, in his old age, he sat alone in his new palace, amidst splendor of architecture greater, if possible, than that of the temple, lonely, hated, and hating, his subjects waiting impatiently, in veiled rebellion, for his death. In his own court, shortly before, a plot had been discovered which had filled all Jerusalem with commotion. No wonder that, as St. Matthew tells us, 'he was troubled.'"

Adoration of the Magi
(From a Painting by Hoffmann)

There came wise men from the east to Jerusalem. We know from the calculations of the great astronomer Kepler, that at this very time there was visible in the heavens a brilliant temporary star. Now the Magi were ardent students of astrology, and believed that any unusual phenomenon in the heavens was the

sign of some remarkable event on earth; and it is possible that, connecting this star, to which their attention would undoubtedly be eagerly directed, with the expectation mentioned by the ancient historians, they were led westward to see if it had been fulfilled. But there must also have been awakened in them a deeper want, to which God responded. If their search began in scientific curiosity and speculation, God led it on to the perfect truth. That is his way always. *James Stalker, Life of Christ.*

2. *Where is he that is born king of the Jews.* Everywhere throughout the east men were looking for the advent of a great king who was to rise from among the Jews. The expectation partly rested on such Messianic prophecies of Isaiah as chapters 9, 11, partly on the later predictions of Daniel 7. It had fermented in the minds of men, heathens as well as Jews, and would have led them to welcome Jesus had He come in accordance with their expectations. As it was, He came precisely as they did not expect Him, shattering their earthly hopes to pieces, and so they did not receive Him. *E. H. Plumptre.*

4. *Scribes of the people.* The successors of Ezra, the official copyists of the Scriptures, who naturally became its expounders. The scribes knew the letter but not the spirit of the Scriptures. The Magi, with less knowledge but greater faith, were nearer the truth. The indifference of the former was hostility in the germ. *Matthew B. Riddle.*

5. *In Bethlehem of Judea.*

O little town of Bethlehem!
How still we see thee lie;
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee to-night. *Phillips Brooks.*

8. *That I may come and worship him also,* were Herod's words, but "that I may send and slay him" were his thoughts. In Matthew 2.16-18 we are told the manner in which he succeeded in carrying out his purpose. "There were children then in Bethlehem who recked not of Christ in their happy carelessness and innocent joy, but they were also to be brought unto His side. Not by the hands of their mothers, as other children would be in days to come, but by the swords of Herod's soldiers. They were to be the first companions of Christ by their martyrdom, and, as in the profound and beautiful conception of Holman Hunt, to follow Him in triumph through His life." *John Watson.*

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LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

3. *And all Jerusalem with him.* The news of the newly-born King of the Jews dismayed and agitated Herod naturally enough, but why Jerusalem, which hated him, should be troubled with him, is a question which only oriental life could answer; indeed, the Bible itself suggests the answer as to why Jerusalem, instead of rejoicing, should be "troubled."

Moses and Aaron approached Pharaoh with a view to obtaining freedom for the children of Israel; but the first and immediate result was more burdens and a heavier yoke put on the Israelites, and they regarded Moses and Aaron as putting a sword in the hands of the Egyptians to slay the Hebrews.

In such circumstances it was natural enough for Jewish Jerusalem to be troubled, in case the news of a Jewish rival to Herod should stir up the wrath of the Idumean and his Roman suzeraines to destroy Jerusalem and massacre the Jews. *Ghosn el Howie, in The Treasury.*

9. *The star went before them.* They traveled by night, in accordance with Eastern custom.

The requisites for an Eastern journey are few and simple—scrip, purse, and shoes. The purse is a small leather bag, hung round the neck under the shirt by country folk, but concealed in the folds of the voluminous girdle worn by townsmen. It contains the owner's money and other valuables, especially the signet ring so treasured by every Arab, who always carries it in this purse. The scrip is a bag of larger dimensions, slung across the shoulder over the outer garment, generally made of leather, but, in the case of the poorest, of flexible matting, in which provisions for the journey, usually olives, dried figs, and thin barley cakes rolled up, are carried. The sandals are simply soles of undressed hide, with the hair on the upper surface, and fastened with thongs. They are always carried by the traveler, who walks barefoot on sandy or grassy ground, but who finds them absolutely necessary for the rocky and thorny paths of the hill country. *Tristram, Eastern Customs in Bible Lands.*

Scrip, Purse, and Sandals

11. *Fell down and worshipped him.* The usual way of showing respect or homage.

They presented unto him gifts. It was the Eastern custom not to

approach princes without gifts. The Queen of Sheba brought Solomon spices, gold, and precious stones.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. The name Jesus was called a hundred times a day in every Jewish neighborhood. It stood upon the rolls of the schools. In most groups of children in the street there was a boy answering to it. It came, as is not unfrequently the case to-day, from a famous soldier. Jesus is the same name as Joshua, being nothing more than Joshua pronounced Greek fashion.

We speak it with instinctive reverence. It is no longer borne of any of our neighbors. And we think of the spiritual meaning of it, and how it befitted Him who came to fight against our common enemy and to save us from our sins. *George Hodges.*

For Older Pupils. The first who came to pay their reverence to the King in the manger were shepherds, fresh from the pastures of Bethlehem, poor and probably but ill-provided with education. It looked then, and afterward, as if the Messiah were chiefly interested in people oppressed by poverty and ignorance.

But here come the Epiphany pilgrims, with their gold and frankincense and myrrh, and again there is a widening out of the boundaries of the gospel. Wealth and wisdom came with them into the presence and allegiance of Jesus. Jesus Christ came to bless the rich and cultured, as well as to benefit the poor. The distinctions which we make amongst men meant absolutely nothing to Him. He valued men always and exactly for what they were. *George Hodges.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. Obedient to the Heavenly Vision

The Shepherds and the Magi were Obedient to the Vision. It was a critical moment with the shepherds of Judea when the song of the angelic host died away, and the vision splendid faded. Shall they follow this vision, which was given them for a purpose, or shall they fail to translate its message into obedience and action?

It was a time of testing for the wise men of the East when they saw the star which told them that Jesus was born. It was a long journey that they had to undertake; if they came from no more distant region than Babylon it would be four months before they could reach Jerusalem. And how could they find the Babe in Jerusalem? They might well have hesitated to set forth on so difficult an errand. But they were men of faith and men of action; they, too, were "obedient to the heavenly vision," and they sought and found the Child Jesus.

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Tissot's Vision. James Tissot, an artist famous for his New Testament scenes, has told us how he was led through obedience to a vision received to devote his life to portraying Christ. He was planning a series of pictures of "The Parisian Woman" and had gone to a church in Paris to make a study of "a fashionable woman posing as a religious devotee." As he sat there a vision came to him. He seemed to see the ruins of a great castle. A weary peasant and his wife were sitting down to rest. On the ground by their side was a bundle that contained all their earthly possessions. As they sat there in despair, the "Man of Sorrows" came and sat beside them, putting His hand in tender protecting care on the peasant's shoulder. "Christ, the Consoler," was the artist's interpretation of the vision.

He returned to his studio, but the vision would not leave him. In his despair at not being able to continue the work in which he had formerly delighted, he became seriously ill. When he recovered he decided to paint his vision of "Christ, the Consoler," in order to put it for ever from his mind. But as he worked, the grandeur of his theme grew on him, and he determined to devote his life to portraying Christ. He went to Palestine and remained there ten years, studying the surroundings in which Christ had lived, and he has given to the world the most marvelous series of pictures of Christ and His disciples that has ever been produced.

Milton's Vision. The early vision that came to John Milton has been graphically told by Newell Dwight Hillis in these words:—

"Waking at midnight in his bleak garret, the vision splendid rose before John Milton. The boy of twelve would fain write a poem that the world would not willingly let die. He knew that whoever would write a heroic poem, must first live a heroic life. From that hour, the youth followed the ideal that led him on, pursuing knowledge unceasingly for seven years, never closing his book before midnight, leaving Cambridge with the approbation of the good, and without stain or spot upon his life. Afterward, making a pilgrimage to Italy for study in that land of song and story, he heard of the civil wars in England, and at once returned, putting away his ambition for culture because he thought it base to be traveling abroad, while his fellow citizens were fighting for liberty at home. When he resisted a brutal soldier's attack who lifted his sword to say, 'I have power to kill you,' the scholar replied, 'And I have power to be killed and to despise my murderer.' Growing old and blind, and falling upon evil days and tongues, out of his heroic life he wrote the immortal poem. Dying, he still pursued his ideal, for moving into the valley and shadow, the blind poet whispered: 'Still guides the heavenly vision.'"

Make Obedience to the Vision a Habit. Good habits are not made on birthdays, nor Christian character at the New Year. The vision may dawn, the dream may waken, the heart may leap with a new inspiration

on some mountain top, but the test, the triumph, is at the foot of the mountain, on the level plain. The workshop of character is every-day life. The uneventful and commonplace hour is where the battle is won or lost. *Maltbie D. Babcock.*

When I am dead,
May this with truth be said,
On the rude stone that marks my lowly head,
That, spite of doubt and indecision,
In spite of weakness, lameness, blindness,
Heart's treachery and fate's unkindness,
Neglect of friends and scorn of foes,
Stark poverty and all its woes,
The body's ills that cloud the mind
And the bold spirit bind,
Still through my earthly course I went,
Not disobedient
Unto the Heavenly Vision.

Harry Lyman Koopman.

II. The Gift of Christ

The Gifts the Wise Men Brought to Jesus. The gifts were a sign of the wise men's courtesy; they meant homage and reverence and allegiance. Thus they were like the gifts that are given at Christmas, whose best value is not in the costliness or usefulness of what is given, but in the regard and remembrance and affection of the giver. *George Hodges.*

'Tis not the weight of jewel or plate,
Or the fondle of silk and fur;
'Tis the spirit in which the gift is rich
As the gifts of the wise men were;
And we are not told whose gift was gold
Or whose the gift of myrrh.

Edmund Vance Cooke.

God's Gift to Us. I can conceive of the time when all the gold and silver and precious stones shall have been digged out of the earth; when all her treasures of iron and copper and tin and nickel shall have been mined to the last ounce. I can conceive of the time when all the fountains of waters shall be dried up and exhausted; when no more rain clouds shall overshadow the earth; when the atmosphere which swathes us in its protecting folds shall thin itself away, and the earth become, as we are told the moon is, an exhausted burnt-out world, airless and rainless—a cinder from which all wealth has been consumed—

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an empty shell. But the unspeakable treasures of grace which are in Christ shall never be exhausted. *George F. Pentecost.*

The Unspeakable Gift. This is among the most striking expressions in the Holy Book. Most gifts can be weighed or measured, analyzed or fully tested; therefore they are speakable gifts. They can be estimated in value pecuniarily, or as beauty, utility, or stored-up force. Love can make a little thing great, and the heart of the giver, except the recipient be in direst need, is worth more than the gift.

But Christ as a gift! Who shall describe it, who shall estimate it, who shall measure it, or weigh it? who would dare to analyze it?

This is the unspeakable gift. *The Christian Advocate.*

III A Little Child Shall Lead Them

The Power of the Christ Child. Christ's birth as the Babe of Bethlehem has made the little child almost divine in its sacredness, almighty in its claim upon love. He has filled our humanity with dignity. All that degraded man, all that oppressed and enslaved man, was doomed by that coming of the Son of God as the Son of Man. Since He, the King of kings and Lord of lords, was wrapped in the swaddling clothes and laid in a manger, humanity is a thing more sacred than any wealth or position or even the trappings of royalty could make it. Labor is uplifted and ennobled, its curse undone, since He bent with sweat of brow as the Carpenter of Nazareth. Poverty is no more a thing of scorn, since He chose it and lived out in it the life that was more than kingly. All the common things of life, its eating and drinking, and waking and sleeping, its round of relationships, are made divine by His example. *Mark Guy Pearse.*

How a Child Saved Silas Marner. The appeal of God in the Child Jesus is illustrated with remarkable power in George Eliot's story, *Silas Marner.* The picture of the old man, soured by injustice, wrongfully suspected of crime, eating his heart out in solitude, possessed by one consuming passion—love for the gold he was slowly accumulating, guinea by guinea, and burying under the floor of his cottage; and then, on that night when he is robbed of his idol, his golden guineas, in all his mad despair finding on his doorstep a little child, beautiful, helpless, appealing, who becomes his savior and sanctifier. And how did that babe save him? By stimulating him to lift himself, by awakening in him a love stronger than his greed, a tenderness he never knew before, an unselfishness that revolutionized his character, banishing his old bad life, changing his old hard heart by the expulsive power of a new affection. The golden hair of a little child becomes more to him than the golden gleam of his lost guineas. *Basil Wilberforce.*

In old days there were angels who came and took men by the hand

and led them away from the city of destruction. We see no white-winged angels now. But yet men are led away from threatening destruction; a hand is put into theirs which leads them forth gently toward a calm and bright land, so that they look no more backward; and the hand may be a little child's. *"Silas Marner."*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Spiritual truths need spiritual discernment.

The wise men honored themselves most in paying homage to the Holy Child.

Reverence is a tribute the best within us pays to the Divine wherever found. *W. W. Stetson.*

Faith evermore overlooks the difficulties of the way, and bends her eyes only to the end. *Bishop Hall.*

Whatsoever sort of wise men they were before, now they begin to be wise men indeed when they set themselves to inquire after Christ. *Henry.*

Wise words in dull ears are but lifeless lore. *Goethe.*

The great Light, which is Christ, is like the star hung over the Magi—fit to blaze in the heavens, and yet stooping to the lowly task of guiding three poor men along a muddy road on earth. *Alexander Maclaren.*

> Hateful to me as are the gates of hell,
> Is he who, hiding one thing in his heart,
> Utters another. *The Iliad.*

One can not long contemplate exalted themes without receiving an impulse, and being lifted into a region where doing wrong becomes a little strange. *George Herbert Palmer.*

Herod sent his soldiers to murder every babe under two years of age in Bethlehem: as well might he have attempted to cut a mountain of adamant asunder as cut the chain of divine purposes. *James Stalker.*

We hear divine messages and see heavenly visions enough, but too often we let them fade into forgetfulness and pass into nothingness. *James H. Snowden.*

Some astronomers believe that they have found the great star around which the whole universe of stars revolves: whether that be true or not, it is undoubtedly true that the star of Bethlehem is the center of this world's spiritual astronomy. *Theodore L. Cuyler.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift. 2 Cor. 9.15.

They first gave their own selves to the Lord. 2 Cor. 8.5.

A gift is as a precious stone in the eyes of him that hath it. Prov. 17.8.

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If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him? Luke 11.13.

The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Rom. 6.23.

Every good and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights. James 1.17.

Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision. Acts 26.19.

Where there is no vision, the people perish. Prov. 29.18.

The father of the righteous shall greatly rejoice; and he that begetteth a wise child shall have joy of him. Prov. 23.24.

Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven. Matt. 19.13, 14.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

The wise men looked about, as they started for their journey, to find the gifts which might best typify their place and nation, and they found gold and frankincense and myrrh. They were their best.

Our best—what is it? The very best we have, the characteristic product of our life. These pilgrims teach us what to do with it. We will offer it to Him. We will consecrate it to His service. We will use it in His name, and not for our own sake—for His sake—this new year. If we have been hoarding it up in the East, in the land of dreams and indolence and speculations and beautiful visions and good intentions, we will rise up and take it in our hands, and carry it along the wise men's road that we may bring it into the Master's presence. *George Hodges.*

THE LESSON SUMMARY

King Herod is greatly troubled. Wise men from the East have come to him inquiring "Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the East and are come to worship him." Is his rule endangered by the birth of a claimant to the royal throne of David, one who will have the allegiance of the turbulent people of Israel? Herod is crafty as well as suspicious. He will learn from the chief priests and scribes "where Christ should be born," he will inform the wise men and order them to return after they have found the child, for he would go and worship him, too. He will learn from them when the star appeared, that he may know the age of the young claimant to his throne. Surely that Babe shall not escape his vigilant search, even though the wise men fail him!

The wise men find the young Child with Mary His mother, and fall down and worship Him. They leave their gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh, and, warned by God in a dream, they do not return to Herod, but depart into their own country another way.

Mocked by the wise men, Herod is very angry, and sends and slays all the children in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under. But the young Child and His mother have already been taken to Egypt by Joseph, for God had warned him.

In this visit of the Magi to the young Child, the Christian church has seen a deep significance, for the visit not only testified to the kingly character of Jesus, but symbolized as well the coming to Him of the Gentile world. It is the Epiphany, or "Manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The prophecies concerning the coming of the Messiah.
2. The condition of the world at Christ's coming.
3. All truths should be tested.
4. God's providences. "In the case of the Magi we have a sign given, accommodated to the false opinion of men, to guide to the truth."

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Locate Nazareth and Jerusalem upon the map. 2. What is the meaning of the second clause of verse 40? 3. In Prov. 3.1-4 and Rom. 14. 17, 18, read what will cause one to find favor with God and man. 4. At what time of the year was the Feast of the Passover held? (April.) 5. Read about the Passover in Deut. 16.1-8. 6. What instruction did children receive in the home? (Deut. 6.6, 7.) 7. What was Christ's first recorded word? What was His last? (John 19.30.)

BETWEEN LESSON II AND LESSON III

Joseph was warned by God in a dream that Herod would seek the young Child's life, and he fled with his family into Egypt. When the wise men failed to return to see Herod, he ordered the slaying of all the children in Bethlehem that were two years old and under. On the death of Herod, the angel of the Lord appeared again to Joseph, telling him that they were dead who sought the young Child's life, and directing him to seek again the land of Israel. Learning that Archelaus reigned in Judea in his father Herod's place, Joseph was afraid to go thither, and came and dwelt in Nazareth, in Galilee, where Antipas, a less cruel son of Herod, ruled. (Matt. 2.13-23. Luke 2.39.)

THE BOY JESUS

Luke 2.40-52. (Read Matt. 2.13-23; Luke 2.39.) Commit v. 51.

Golden Text

Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man. Luke 2.52.

Time: April, A. D. 9.
Place: Jerusalem. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 9-11, 82, and 114.

LESSON TEXT. LUKE 2.40-52.

40 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.
41 And now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover.
42 And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast.
43 And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not *of it.*
44 But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among *their* kinsfolk and acquaintance.
45 And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him.
46 And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.
47 And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.
48 And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.
49 And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?
50 And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.
51 And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.
52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

40. *Waxed* is Old English for *grew.*
40. *Filled with wisdom.* The Greek word **πληρούμενον**, *filled,* is a pres-

ent participle, and signifies rather *a continuous process of being filled.* Jesus grew in wisdom as well as in stature, like all normal boys. *The grace of God was upon him.* Here there was more than guidance, more than strength, a manifest outflowing of the divine favor in the moral beauty of a perfectly holy childhood. *Plumptre.*

41. *His parents.* Before the law, Joseph was the father of Jesus.

42. *They went up to Jerusalem.* Jerusalem is about 2,700 feet above sea level.

46. *After three days.* Three days measured from the time they had last seen Him. The first day was the day they missed Him; the second, the day of the return; the third, the day they searched and found Him in the Temple. *Doctors,* rabbis.

49. *About my Father's business.* The Greek words ἐν τοῖς τοῦ πατρός μου may mean either in the house of my father or in the affairs of my father. The Greek τοῖς is the article in the dative plural, and has no noun with which it agrees. "But as Jesus in His reply refers expressly to the search of the parents, which He represents as having been made needlessly, it is most natural to find in this answer the designation of the locality, in which they ought to have known that He was to be found, without seeking Him in *rebus Patris.*" *Meyer.*

51. *Came to Nazareth.* Here He remained eighteen years, "the hidden years" of growth and preparation for His mission. *Was subject unto them.* The participle and the finite verb denote *habitual, continuous subjection. Vincent.* There was, therefore, in the years that followed, no premature assumption of authority—nothing but the pattern of a life perfect in all its home relationships. *Plumptre.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

49. *Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?* Many of us must have seen, all must have read of, instances of a call to their spirits being clearly recognized by very young children, and coloring and molding their whole after-lives. We can scarcely say how early this awakening of a consciousness of what he is, of what he is meant to do, has come to this or that young child, but no one will question that it does come in many instances long before the age of twelve. *Thomas Hughes.*

It is a noble progress and expansion of life, when the first independent venture of a young man on a career of his own, is not the wilful claim of the prodigal—"Give me the portion of goods that falleth to me"—but the reverent appeal of Jesus, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" *Phillips Brooks.*

52. *And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and man.* To the eighteen years between this scene and the beginning of the public work of Christ, no allusion is made by any of the four biographers. The best explanation of this large omission is that in that

epoch, and in almost all past epochs, child life was not a matter of importance. It did not enter largely into literature, nor into the category of the great things of the world. *David Swing.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

42. *When he was twelve years old.* The stages of Jewish childhood were marked as follows: at three the boy was weaned, and wore for the first time the fringed or tasseled garment prescribed by Num. 15.38-41. His education began at first under his mother's care. At five he was to learn the law, at first by extracts, written on scrolls, of the more important passages, and by catechetical teaching in school. At twelve he became more directly responsible for his obedience to the Law, and on the day when he attained the age of thirteen, put on for the first time the phylacteries which were worn at the recital of his daily prayer. *E. H. Plumptre.*

42. *After the custom of the feast.* According to the Mosaic Law every man in Israel must go to the Temple at Jerusalem to celebrate the three great festivals—the feasts of the Passover, of the Pentecost, and of the Tabernacles.

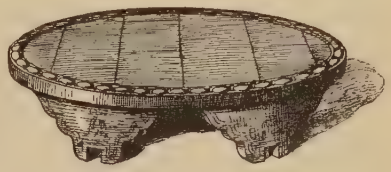
43. *When they had fulfilled the days.* The festival lasted seven days, and it would seem from this that they remained the entire time. During the first two days of the feast the Passover was eaten, the sacrifice offered, and the first ripe barley brought to the Temple and waved before the Lord. It was lawful for those in attendance to leave after the third day.

44. *Supposing him to have been in the company.* It is not, in fact, surprising that, in the midst of such a crowd, Joseph and His mother should suppose that Jesus was in the company with "His kinsfolk and acquaintance," nor is the time that elapsed before they became so alarmed at His absence as to turn back and seek for Him at all remarkable. I question whether there is ever a pilgrimage made from Jerusalem to the Jordan at this day without the separation of children and parents equally prolonged; and, in the case we are considering, it was the absence of a Youth Who, His parents well knew, had never done in His whole life one unwise or improper act. *Thompson, The Land and the Book.*

46. *They found him in the temple sitting in the midst of the doctors.* A chamber of the Temple was set apart as a kind of free open school. The doctors or teachers—famous "Doctors of the Law"—sat "in Moses' seat"; the older students on a low bench; the younger on the ground, literally "at the feet" (Acts 22.3) of their instructor. *E. H. Plumptre.*

Both hearing them and asking them questions. It was customary, not only for the rabbis to teach and question, but for the disciples themselves to ask questions. "A great part of the rabbinical books consists of the answers of the rabbis to the questions of their scholars." *Alford.*

51. *And He went down with them and came to Nazareth.* The traveler who has followed any of the children of Nazareth—as I have done—to their simple homes, and seen the scanty furniture, the plain but sweet and wholesome food, the uneventful, happy, patriarchal life, may form a vivid conception of the manner in which Jesus lived. Nothing can be plainer than those houses, with the doves sunning themselves on the white roofs, and the vines wreathed about them.



A Village Table

The mats, or carpets, are laid loose along the walls; shoes and sandals are taken off at the threshold; from the center hangs a lamp which forms the only ornament of the room; in some recess in the wall is placed the wooden chest, painted with bright colors, which contains the books or other possessions of the family; on a ledge that runs around the wall, within easy reach, are neatly rolled up the gay-colored quilts, which serve as beds, and on the same ledge are ranged the earthen vessels for daily use; near the door stand the large common water-jars of red clay with a few twigs and green leaves—often of aromatic shrubs—thrust into their orifices to keep the water cool. At meal-time a painted wooden stool is placed in the center of the apartment, a large tray is put upon it, and in the middle of the tray stands the dish of rice and meat, or *libban,* or stewed fruits, from which all help themselves in common. Both before and after the meal the servant, or the youngest member of the family, pours water over the hands from a brazen ewer into a brazen bowl. So quiet, so simple, so humble, so uneventful was the outward life of the family of Nazareth. *F. W. Farrar.*

Awaiting Orders

51. *Was subject unto them.* An undutiful child is seldom heard of among the Arabs or Egyptians. Among the middle and higher classes, the child usually greets the father in the morning by kissing his hand, and then stands before him in an humble attitude, with one hand covered by the other, to receive any order, or to await his permission to depart. Sons often wait upon the father and his guests, at meals and on other occasions,

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and they do not cease to act thus when they have become men. *Lane.*

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. What part of the biography of a great man is usually the most interesting? Is it not the story of his boyhood, the anecdotes that show how his greatness was foreshadowed in his youth?

When you hear about Benjamin West, the famous artist, you like to hear how, when a boy, he took the hair from the cat's tail to make paint-brushes with, and squeezed out the juice from poke-berries for paint; when you hear about Robert Fulton, who built the first good steamboat, you like to hear how the boy tired of poling a flat boat out to the fishing-ground, and made a paddle-wheel for the boat that could be turned by a crank, so as not to pole any more; when you are told about Louisa Alcott, the writer, you like to learn how she wrote verses when a child, and turned the old fairy tales into little plays that she and her sisters played in the barn.

What would we not give could we know all about the childhood and youth of Jesus, could we see Him as He lived in His home at Nazareth, watch Him at Joseph's carpenter's bench, and hear Him as He talked with His mother and with His friends and playmates! Only one event in all His youth has been recorded for us, an event that took place when He was twelve years old, and this is the subject of our lesson to-day.

For Older Pupils. Should we find a young man of twelve making good sketches on a canvas and then, having disappeared, he should suddenly come back to public notice as a skilful painter, we should know that the interval not seen had been only a continuation of what we had seen at the twelfth year, and saw on a higher perfection at thirty. If a stream is clear and fresh and sweet at its fountain and clear and fresh and sweet at its mouth, we must conclude that it flows all the way through rocky or pebbly fields.

In such a world of analogies we see Jesus at the age of twelve studying the great questions of society and of all morals, and thus pondering about the Father's business He enters into those hidden days, and lo, when He emerges, He has the Sermon of the Mount upon His lips. We seem to know all the interval, and can say that in those eighteen summers and winters this Galilean was putting together those truths which afterwards shone like a sun upon a darkened world. *David Swing.*

Luke is the only one of the evangelists who tells us about Jesus' visit to Jerusalem at the feast of the Passover when a lad of twelve years.

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. Three Kinds of Growth

How Christ Grew. Perhaps, apart from the Master, one of the

most wonderful illustrations the world has ever had of perfection of spirit producing perfection of work was that of Stradivarius, the greatest maker of violins. When he was at work upon them, he would pass into the woods, and placing his hand on the trees would know by the very touch, which wood was best for each part of the musical mechanism. He discovered the tones of music in the fibre of the wood, with the result that he made a perfect instrument. In him there was a development of spirit on the side of music.

Now, lift the thought, and remember that Jesus of Nazareth was not developed on one side only, but was perfect in His understanding of all the methods of God in creation. See, then, how His work would be most perfect.

Jesus grew in favour with men. The appreciation of this statement, very often lost sight of, is that He grew not only in favor with God, but with men. It is not a sign of being in the grace of God when one is out of favor with men. It is very beautiful to read that in those long years at Nazareth Jesus was a favorite. Let this never be forgotten, *He grew in favor with God and men. G. Campbell Morgan.*

We Should Not be Content to Remain in a State of Spiritual Childhood. Contentment with one's spiritual experiences is a sign, not of attainment, but of failure to make progress. "He who finds nothing in his yesterdays to condemn, only reveals the fact that he has taken no new step forward to-day."

When Emerson was journeying across the continent he was weighed at Cheyenne. Afterwards he asked a fellow traveler how much he had weighed. "A hundred and forty and a half," was the answer. "Yes, yes, a hundred and forty and a half," said Emerson. "That half I prize; it is an index of better things."

Growth Comes with Practice. A prominent teacher has said:—

"In education we do a thing only until we know how to do it. Then we pass on to some new task. When we have read Cæsar, we turn to Virgil; when we have mastered geometry, we pass on to trigonometry; when we have analyzed some simple chemical, we throw it away and essay something more difficult; when we have done the easier work in wood, we make a box."

What is true of the way in which knowledge is acquired at school, is true of the way in which spiritual advancement is attained. Doctor Hillis describes how Mr. Moody grew from an ignorant youth to a great spiritual leader:—

"Mr. Moody is a widow's son; he is unschooled when he goes to Boston to begin his career at seventeen; refused entrance to the church because he does not understand what is involved; after six months is received; goes to Chicago at eighteen; is refused a class in the Sunday-school because he can not read well; finally obtains permission to form a class of his own; the next Sunday morning, comes in triumphant, fol-

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lowed by eighteen ragamuffins; rents a room on the North side; when he can not speak for himself, commits the Bible to memory and recites it in prayer-meeting, for he is determined to speak; since he has no information of his own to give to the boys, reads from the writings of others; learns to pray by praying; learns to speak by speaking; learns to meet men by meeting them; and finally becomes one of the greatest forces for good in the nineteenth century. What has been done, can be done. This law of growth by exercise is for all."

Growth in Wisdom. There is, it is believed, among the old records of the town of Boston, an order to this effect, that a given road be constructed as far as Newton, but no farther, for the reason that it was extremely unlikely that a highway back into the wilderness beyond that point would ever be needed! The Pilgrims and Puritans had as good a right to think that they had brought under cultivation all the available land within the boundaries of what is now the United States, as most educated persons have for supposing that their total intellectual capacity is engaged in the conduct of life. As the strip of land on the Atlantic seaboard occupied by the colonies was to the mighty continent beyond it, so is the brain power under actual development, even among educated persons, to the total brain capacity. *S. A. Gordon.*

Growth in Grace. A single thread of wire, three-sixteenths of an inch in diameter, was hung from tower to tower across the East River in New York. It looked like a mere spider's web. And yet this little wire was the beginning of a great bridge that now spans that river, where four huge cables, each one composed of seven thousand six hundred and ninety-six wires twisted into a rope eighteen inches in diameter, support the structure. About that first slender wire thread, strand after strand was woven, and now five thousand tons of wire are woven into those four cables.

The Christian starts out in his spiritual life as weak as that single thread of wire, but around his little faith and little knowledge, he may throw strand after strand of greater spiritual vision, greater grasp of spiritual truths, until he becomes a tower of Christian strength, reaching out toward "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

II. A Purpose in Life

Youth the Forerunner of Age. *I must be about my Father's business.* That *must,* first mentioned when He was twelve years old, dominated Jesus' life. "The thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts," and the ideals that youth holds determine the after-lives that youth leads. So many young people drift into wickedness simply because their lives are purposeless. If they learn early that every life has a duty—a "must"—then at the close of life they will be able to say of their duty,—God's gift,—"It is finished."

Lives Valueless because Lacking in Worthy Purposes. Doctor Washington Gladden says: "I doubt whether a sadder, a more depressing picture was ever painted, in any age of the world, than that which is found in a few of the middle chapters of Richard Whiteing's novel, *No. 5 John Street*—his picture of the life of the rich young man of London. It is not a grossly immoral life as he shows it to us; but it is so empty, so trivial, so utterly devoid of purpose, so absorbed with inanities. Decidedly the people of the slums, between whom and these heavy swells of the West End the story vibrates, are a far more hopeful class.

"The most striking and manifestly realistic feature of this description is the impression it gives us of the labor and weariness of this kind of life. The engagements are so multitudinous and the demands of this artificial life are so exacting, that existence becomes a burden. 'I tell you,' says one of these devotees of fashion, 'it's just like working in mosaic,—so many little bits to fit in. I don't think our set ever gets a chance in life.'

"'Always slaving,' comments a friend. 'That's it. Sometimes when I feel I can lay hold of it all, I wish I was a "bloke," with four bank holidays a year, and there an end.'

"'And yet we are called the idle rich!'

"'Idle rich! Where would the poor be if we struck for a quiet life? I work ten hours a day inventing wants for myself, and work for them, and very often eight hours overtime.'"

Henry Ward Beecher's Figure of an Aimless Life. Unless a man has an aim, his life is like a harness, all the parts of which have been unbuckled from their fellows, and which are so many separate straps heaped up in a room. Unless they be put together again and placed on the horse, he can not draw.

How to Attain the True End of Life. One man will tell you the end of life is to be true. Another will tell you it is to deny self. Another will say it is to keep the commandments. A fourth will point us to the Beatitudes. One will tell you it is to *do* good, another that it is to *get* good, another that it is to *be* good. But the end of life is in none of these things. It is more than all, and it includes them all. The end of life is not to deny self, nor to be true, nor to keep the Ten Commandments—simply to do God's will. It is not to get good, nor even to be good—just what God wills, whether that be working or waiting or winning or losing, or suffering or recovering, or living or dying. *Henry Drummond.*

III. Obedience and Honor Due to Parents

Filial Reverence in Hebrew Families. The reverence of children towards their parents was carried to the sublime in Hebrew families. The child found the ideal of his obedience in Isaac's willingly yielding him-

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self to death at his father's command. Disobedience to a father or mother was made a public crime, which the community might punish with death. The tender care of an aged parent was regarded by every Jew as a sacred duty. The son of Sirach only repeated the sentiment of all Scripture when he said, "Honor thy father with thy whole heart, and forget not the sorrows of thy mother. Remember that thou wast begotten of them; and how canst thou recompense them the things that they have done for thee." That a father's or a mother's blessing was prized as sacred, and its being withheld regarded as the saddest loss, shows how deeply such teaching had sunk into the Jewish mind. *Geikie, Life of Christ.*

Garfield's Example. The manly kiss that Garfield gave his aged mother before the assembled multitude on the day of his great triumph endeared him to the people more than any other single act of his.

Remorse for Disobedience to Parents. Many fine young gentlemen, who are not worthy to tie the shoe-latchets of their fathers on whom they depend, almost seem to think it derogatory to use the grand old honored designation of "my father." For that term of love and respect, an ignoble conceit substitutes some vulgar or loveless nickname. There are fathers, in all classes, who have loved and cherished their children—tried to make them happy, toiled for them, surrounded them with every indulgence, given them the very best opportunities—whose children take all love and self-denial as the merest matter of course, due to their own transcendent merits, and give nothing in return. . . .

To the living you can show forbearance, honor, tenderness; but it will be too late—too late—for kindness to the dead! Many have been burdened for long years by remorse for unthankfulness to parents.

When James IV of Scotland was a boy, he stood in arms against his father. All his manhood was one long bitter penance for that sin. In memory of it he wore under his robes an iron belt, and to that belt he added every year a new link, that his repentance might be heavier every year of his life. *F. W. Farrar.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

A purpose is always a companion. *W. R. Alger.*

"The secret of victory is in getting a good ready," said Nestor to the Greeks.

Seeking wisdom when you are old is like writing on water; seeking it when you are young is like graving on stone. *Oriental Proverb.*

The word of God is given us, not as a graven granite block, but as a forest is given to the botanist and the ornithologist. *W. F. P. Faunce.*

The granary must be filled before the poor are fed; knowledge must be gained before knowledge is given. *Plato.*

Bind together your spare hours by the cord of some definite purpose, and know not how much may be accomplished. *Wm. M. Taylor.*

Great souls have wills, feeble ones have only wishes. *Chinese Proverb.*

"The youth," says Disraeli, "who does not look up will look down; and the spirit that does not soar is destined perhaps to grovel."

"Pluck at the gown of gold," says the Scotch proverb, "and you may get a sleeve o't."

To him that knoweth not the port to which he is bound, no wind can be favorable; neither can he who has not yet determined at what mark he is going to shoot, direct his arrow aright. *Leighton.*

A man is worthless unless he has in him a lofty devotion to an ideal, and he is worthless, also, unless he strives to realize this ideal by practical methods. *Roosevelt.*

Find your purpose, and fling your life out to it, and the loftier your purpose is, the more sure you will be to make the world richer in every enrichment of yourself. *Phillips Brooks.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

He that serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men. Rom. 14.18.

I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. John 6.38.

Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it. Prov. 22.6.

And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. Isaiah 11.2.

And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him. John 8.29.

I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. John 9.4.

Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart: So shalt thou find favor and good understanding in the sight of God and man. Prov. 3.3, 4.

Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. Exodus 20.12.

Children, obey your parents, in all things; for this is well pleasing unto the Lord. Col. 3.20.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

President James B. Angel of the University of Michigan says: "As a rule the general trend of character and purpose of young men is determined by the time they have reached the age of eighteen. If a youth allows himself to drift along beyond that age without having determined on what principles his life is to be fashioned, he is in great danger of

being drawn away into undesirable habits by the influence of untoward surroundings and especially of unprofitable companions. Decide early and decide right what shall be your rules of conduct."

"If you want a happy life, a great life, a life that shall be a song, then it must be a Christian, a wholly and completely Christian life, not a partially Christian life, such as you will graft upon the old hard timber of a youth spent in sin by some late repentance, but such a life as you can have only when you give the dew of your youth to God." *Horace Bushnell.*

THE LESSON SUMMARY

Our lesson begins and ends in the same way. *And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon him,* is the first verse; *And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man,* is the last verse. He grew physically, mentally, and spiritually. It was a gradual development until a perfect manhood was reached.

The one incident recorded between these two verses is all that the Gospels tell about the life of Jesus from His infancy to His Temptation at the age of thirty. The scene is the one so well known from Hoffman's beautiful picture. The twelve-year-old Jesus, whose earnest, spiritual face is perhaps the most satisfactory of all artists' representations of the Christ, is surrounded by the learned Jewish doctors of the law, who are "astonished at His understanding and answers."

Jesus had come up to Jerusalem with His parents to celebrate the Passover. His parents had started homeward, and having failed to find Him among the company at the end of the first day's journey, had returned and searched for Him, till they came upon the scene depicted by the artist. To Mary's troubled rebuke, "Why hast thou thus dealt with us?" Jesus gave an answer that she could not understand, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" It may be that Jesus then first realized that He was different from those with whom He lived. It may be that the first sight of Jerusalem and the temple, the religious observances of the Feast, and the questions and answers of the doctors, caused the real meaning of His life and mission to dawn on His mind. Whatever His thoughts, He remained the true, obedient, perfect Jewish Youth, and returning home with His parents, He "was subject unto them."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Is a child's character formed chiefly by heredity, environment, or training?

2. How early should children be trained in the habit of church going?

3. To what extent and until what age should children be subject to their parents?

4. What do we know about what Jesus must have seen and done in His youth from His later sayings?

5. Mary is a perpetual type of people who, intrusted with any great and sacred interest, identify their own lives with that interest and care for it conscientiously, but who, when the interest begins to manifest its own vitality and to shape its own methods, are filled with perplexity. *Phillips Brooks.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Look up these references to the custom of preparing the way for kings: Isa. 45.2; 57.14; 62.10. 2. What is repentance? 3. Where are the quotations of verses 2 and 3 found? (Malachi 3.1; Isa. 40.3.) 4. Read the account of Christ's baptism in Matthew 3, Luke 3.1-22, and John 1.19-34. 5. What may have been some of the reasons that Christ wished to be baptized by John? What principle of conduct is taught by the reason Christ gives John in Matt. 3.15? 6. How old was Jesus at the time of his baptism? (30.) How old was John? (31.) 7. Why might John have been proud rather than humble? 8. What does Acts 1.22, as well as the first verse of the next lesson, tell you in regard to the thought of the apostles about the "Gospel story" beginning with John's preaching? 9. From the references given under *John the Baptist* in the Subject-Index of your Bible, write a full account of John's life. Add an estimate of his character. 10. Make a list of the chief events in Christ's life that fall under *Part I, the Thirty Years of Private Life,* from the birth of Jesus to the coming of John the Baptist. (Matt. 1; 2; Luke 1; 2.)

BETWEEN LESSON III AND LESSON IV

The eighteen years spent by Jesus at Nazareth after His visit to the temple are passed over in silence by the Gospel writers. We now take up *Part II, the Preparation for the Public Ministry.* The herald of the new era is John the Baptist. From the wilderness he came to the Jordan, preaching repentance to the vast crowds that gathered there to be baptized by him. "The kingdom of heaven is at hand," he proclaimed. Evidently he doubted the sincerity of their purpose, for he cried out to them, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth, therefore, fruits worthy of repentance."

When all men were musing in their hearts whether John were the Christ or not, John drew a sharp contrast between himself, who baptized with water, and the Mightier One to come who would baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire. (Matt. 3.1-12; Luke 3.1-18.)

THE BAPTISM OF JESUS

Mark 1.1-11. (Read Matt. 3.1-17; Luke 3.1-22.) Commit vv. 10, 11.

Golden Text

Prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only. 1 Sam. 7.3.

Time: A. D. 27.
Place: The Jordan. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 12 and 39.

LESSON TEXT. MARK 1.1–11

1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God;
2 As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.
3 The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.
4 John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.
5 And there went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.
6 And John was clothed with camel's hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts and wild honey;
7 And preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose.
8 I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.
9 And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan.
10 And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him:
11 And there came a voice from heaven, *saying,* Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ.* This does not signify the book which St. Mark wrote, but the evangelical teaching of Jesus Christ. St. Mark means that the gospel announcement by Jesus Christ had such a beginning as had been predicted by Isaiah and Malachi, namely, the teaching of John the Baptist, and his testimony concerning Christ. *Bickersteth.*

Jesus Christ the Son of God. (1) *Jesus,* the name He bore as a human being, suggestive, therefore, of His Humanity, yet in itself implying that He was the Salvation, the Help, the Jehovah. (2) *Christ,* an official name, denoting His anointing and appointment by God to the discharge of the Messianic office, as the Prophet, Priest, and King of men. (Note that the combined name, *Jesus Christ,* does not occur elsewhere in the three gospels.) (3) *The Son of God.* A designation which impresses upon us His divinity and authority. *Thompson.*

2. *Behold* begins the quotation from Malachi 3.1.

3. *The voice of one crying in the wilderness.* Isaiah 40.3.

4. *John.* In accordance with, and in fulfilment of, these prophetic anticipations, appeared John. *Bruce. In the wilderness.* The wilderness of Judea, Matt. 3.1, the wild desert country stretching from the western side of the Jordan to the Dead Sea. *Baptism of repentance.* Baptism is an act of profession, and is related to repentance as the declaration of forgiveness is to forgiveness. *Gould. Repentance.* The Greek word which is translated by the verb *repent* is a compound of a verb meaning *to think* and a preposition meaning both *after* and *different,* hence to *repent* means *to think differently after.* "Repentance is primarily a change of mind which issues in regret and in change of conduct." *Vincent.*

Sandals

7. *Latchet.* The word is now obsolete. The *thong* or *lace* which bound the sandals to the foot.

8. *Baptize with fire.* Fire consumes and purifies: the Messiah will remove from the hearts of men all that is reprehensible. *Holtzmann.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

3. *Prepare ye the way of the Lord.* We are all of us road-builders. Every deed we do lays a track for something to follow after. No truer word did Horace Bushnell ever speak than when he said, "Nothing makes an inroad without making a road." Psychologists now tell us that there are thought tracks in the brain—roads made by thoughts which have made inroads. Perhaps we should find love tracks in the heart, if we could examine it that way. Certainly there are character tracks, on which

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trains of habit travel all over our lives. How pertinent, then, how forcible, is the prophet's exhortation to Israel and to us, "Make level . . . a highway for our God!" *Sunday School Times.*

4. *The baptism of repentance for the remission of sin.* With the call to repent, John united a significant rite for all who were willing to admit their sins, and promise amendment of life. It was the new and striking requirement of baptism, which John had been sent by divine appointment to introduce. Bathing in the Jordan had been a sacred symbol, at least, since the days of Naaman; but immersion by one like John, with open and contrite sorrow for sin, sacred vows of amendment, and hope of forgiveness, if those proved lasting, and all this in preparation for the Messiah, was something wholly new in Israel. It marked, in the most striking way, the wonderful moral revolution which had taken place in the hearts of the people. *Geikie, Life and Words of Christ.*

5. *Confessing their sins.* This confessing of sins by individuals was a new thing in Israel. There was a collective confession of the great day of atonement, and individual confession in certain specified cases (Numb. 5.7), but no great spontaneous self-unburdenment of penitent souls, every man apart. It must have been a stirring sight. *Bruce.*

7. *The latchet of whose shoes . . . unloose.* This was considered the most menial service. "Every office which a servant will do for his master the scholar should perform for his teacher, except loosing his sandal thong," said the rabbis. *Wilbur F. Crafts.*

9. *Jesus was baptized of John.* No doubt it was His will in the first place, by so submitting to baptism, to set His seal to the teaching and ministry of John. Again, as He was to be the head of His Church and the Captain of our salvation, He was pleased to undergo that which He afterwards enjoined on all His followers. And, once more, His baptism consecrated the baptism of Christians for ever; even as afterwards His own partaking of the Eucharist gave still further sanction to His injunction that His disciples ever after should continually partake of it. But, beyond all this, His baptism was the formal setting apart for His ministry, and was a most important portion of His consecration to be the High Priest of God. *Smith's Bible Dictionary.*

10. *The spirit like a dove descending upon him.* The purpose of the descent of the Spirit on Jesus was twofold. In John's gospel it is represented as principally meant to certify the Baptist of the identity of the Messiah. But we can not exclude its effect on Jesus. For Him it was the divine anointing for His official mediatorial work. A king is king before he is anointed or crowned. These are but the signs of what we may call the official assumption of His royalty. *Alexander Maclaren.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

3. *Prepare ye the way of the Lord.* Kings, when setting out to visit

the remote provinces of their kingdoms, were usually preceded by heralds to announce their approach and pioneers to prepare the way—removing obstacles, and so making rough places smooth; bridging streams, filling up the valleys, leveling the hills and so causing a straight direct road to take the place of a circuitous and devious route.

When Jehovah restored the Hebrew exiles from Babylon to their own land, the region through which they had to pass was dreary and desolate, and, in some districts, pathless. To the preparation of a way through the difficulties of such a district for the returning Hebrew exiles, with the great King at their head, the words of the prophet primarily referred. *J. J. Given.*

6. *Clothed with camel's hair.* The dress was probably adopted by the Baptist as reviving the outward appearance of Elijah. The coarse hair of the camel was not often used in manufactures of this kind, and the raiment from it would be used only by the poorest class, or, as here, as the mark of voluntary poverty. *E. H. Plumptre.*

A girdle of skins about his loins. Not only the prophets, but all Jews used a girdle to keep their long flowing garment more closely about them, especially when traveling or at work.

His food was locusts. All the Bedouins of Arabia, and the inhabitants of towns in Medj and Hedjaz are accustomed to eat locusts. I have seen at Medina locust shops, where they are sold by the measure. In Egypt and Nubia they are eaten only by the poorest beggars. *Buckhardt.*

9. *Jesus came from Nazareth.* Let us try to picture to ourselves what sort of dress Christ habitually wore. He had neither the fine linen nor the sumptuous raiment of those who live in king's houses; neither had He a long flowing robe like the Scribes and Pharisees. Upon His head He must always have worn the turban, the national head-gear, used alike by rich and poor. Painters make a mistake when they represent Christ bareheaded. Every one wore the head covered. The turban He wore was probably white. It was fastened under the chin by a cord, and at the side fell down to the shoulders and over the tunic. Under His turban He wore His hair rather long, and His beard uncut. His tunic, the underneath vesture, was of one piece without seam; it was therefore of some value (John 19.33), and had probably been given Him by one of those women who "ministered to Him of their substance." Over this He wore the *talith,* loose and flowing. This mantle was not white, for we are told it became white during the transfiguration (Matt. 17.2.) It was not red, for that was only the military color. It is possible it was blue, for blue was then very common; or it may have been simply white with brown stripes. In any case Jesus had at the four corners of this mantle the *Çiççith,* the blue or white fringes. He wore sandals on his feet, as we learn from John the Baptist; and when He was traveling, going from place to place, He doubtless wore a girdle round the loins and carried a stick in His hands. *Edmond Stapfer, Palestine in the Time of Christ.*

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THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. You remember how the man Ernest, in Hawthorne's beautiful allegory, daily gazed on the Great Stone Face, admiring its dignity, serenity, and benevolence, until he came, all unconsciously to himself, to possess the same qualities. He became so transformed that at last he was revealed to his neighbors as the long-promised one who should be like the Great Stone Face. This allegory teaches a great truth. We grow like that on which we think and meditate;—we grow like that which we earnestly wish to become.

When we see the sturdiness of character, the boldness of thought, the humility of feeling, the sincerity of motive, the simpleness of life, of John the Baptist as he stands at the fords of the Jordan and preaches to the crowds that come to hear him, we can know that he had been living "alone with God, thinking God's thoughts after Him" in those years spent in the wilderness.

For Older Pupils. Notwithstanding the wonders attending John's birth, for thirty years he dropped out of sight, when all at once he burst upon the scene like the flashing of a meteor. There was a voice heard in the wilderness, and the cry came, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

No name could arouse the nation like Elijah's; and when the news began to spread from town to town, and at last reached Jerusalem, that one had risen like unto Elijah in appearance and dress; that the eloquence of Heaven and the power of God was upon him; that he was a Nazarite from his birth;—when these strange rumors got abroad, the people flocked to hear him.

In New York or London, or any large city, any man of note can gather a large audience; but let him go away into the desert and see if he can draw the inhabitants from the large cities to hear him, as John did. Like Elijah, he was intrepid and uncompromising. He did not preach to please the people, for he denounced their sins. *D. L. Moody.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. Repentance

The Nature of Repentance. The little girl who defined repentance as "Being sorry enough to quit" thoroughly understood the meaning of this word. There are too many people like the Japanese orator at a political meeting. He had called a public official a thief, and when a policeman gravely spoke to him in a low tone, he at once said to his audience, "The chief of police requests me to retract the word I have spoken. Although the word of a sage should never be taken back, let us make a concession; let us take back the word and keep the idea." We

would take back the wrong deed we have done when we see its consequences, but we allow the idea to remain with us, and when the next occasion comes we sin again.

Genuine repentance means the putting away not only of the evil acts but also of the evil thoughts. The evil can not be overthrown, root and branch, unless the thoughts of the mind and the desires of the heart are made right; outward evil acts can not be repented and inward evil thoughts still be harbored. We do not destroy a weed by cutting off the leaves and letting the stalk branch out again; we pull it up, root and all.

The Stages in Repentance. The mountain of penitence is steep. The entrance to it, indeed, is so easy that it is like a mere gap in the hedge filled up by a forkful of thorns; but, once entered, the soul must climb, and climb, and climb, however weary, with only this consolation, that the more resolutely we climb the more easy will the climb become. The first thought followed by a resolve, the first divine resolve followed by an action, leads to the portal of conscious deliverance. *F. W. Farrar.*

Death-bed Repentance. How many men secretly think that they can practically do as they like all their available lives, but can repent on their death-beds! It is the favorite delusion which Satan encourages, and of all others the most futile. I have seen many death-beds. I never once saw a death-bed repentance. Men on their death-beds are mostly in the worst possible condition for the mighty effort which a sincere repentance costs. Many death-beds are like that of the wicked Cardinal in Shakespeare's *Henry VI:*

> Lord Cardinal, if thou think'st on heaven's bliss,
> Hold up thy hand, make signal of thy hope.—
> He dies, and makes no sign.—O God, forgive him!
>
> *F. W. Farrar.*

Were They Repentant? Study these men of the Bible, and ask yourself whether their respective attitudes toward their sin indicated repentance or not. Give your reasons:—

Esau, who sold his birthright.
Reuben, who sold his brother
Pharaoh, who let Israel go.
Balaam, who would not prophesy falsely.
Saul, who threw away his crown.
David, who secured Uriah's death.
Job, who was satisfied with himself.
Jonah, who ran away from his work.
Pilate, who washed his hands of responsibility.
Judas, who brought back the betrayal money.
Zaccheus, who restored his unlawful gains.
Felix, who trembled before Paul's preaching.
Paul, who calls himself the chief of sinners.
Peter, who denied his Lord. *Epworth Herald.*

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II. Power of Personality

Truth and Personality. Like Luther, or Latimer, or Knox, John the Baptist forgot self in his grand fidelity. Cold prudence or timid caution had no place in a soul so intensely in earnest. The truth which he comes to proclaim is higher than man, and alone commands his homage. *Cunningham Geikie.*

Truth and personality must work together. In every great reform in the world's history, you will notice that the truth in it has never triumphed until it has been lifted in glowing utterances in the life of some one who has been inspired by that truth. The power of the Reformation was the truth that fired in Luther's word and kindled into flame in the burning words of Knox. Modern slavery meets its death blow only when the truth leaps to utterance in the glowing personalities of Sumner and Garrison.

The little carbon loop hangs in your electric lights, a dull thing seemingly devoid of power. The electric current is stored in your batteries or dynamos, undetected and unseen. Either one seems without utility or power. But make the necessary connection. Let this subtle fluid with its mystic power charge the carbon, and there flashes out the brilliancy of the electric light. Just so it is with truth and personality. Truth leaps to utterance only in personality. Personality becomes living, burning eloquence only when inspired by truth. *Wilton Merle Smith.*

Character Must be Back of the Message. In the *Iliad,* Homer makes a man named Thersites deliver a speech against Agamemnon. The speech in ink is magnificent. It is among the finest things in the *Iliad.* But it had no effect upon the troops. Its only effect was to bring down the staff of Ulysses upon the shoulder of the speaker. What was the source of weakness? The personality of Thersites. Pope says that if Ulysses had made that speech, the troops would have sailed for Greece that very night. In engineering it is a rule that a cannon should be at least one hundred times heavier than its shot. A man's character should be a hundred times heavier than what he says. *David Gregg.*

Commanding Personalities. Such power had Whitefield that the statesmen and philosophers of London used to leave the metropolis on Saturday and journey far into the country to join the crowds, often numbering twenty thousand people, that followed this preacher from village to village. Benjamin Franklin tells us that the charm in Whitefield's speech was not his musical voice, not his stream of thought running clear as crystal, not his sudden electric outbursts, when the great man seemed on fire; the something that men have tried in vain to analyze was his character—goodness and sincerity glowing and throbbing in and through his words, just as the electric current glows and throbs through the connecting wires.

Carlyle says that in 1848, during the riot in Paris, the mob swept down

a street blazing with cannon, killed the soldiers, spiked the guns, only to be stopped a few blocks beyond by an old, white-haired man who signaled for silence. Then the leader of the mob said: "Citizens, it is De la Eure. Sixty years of pure life is about to address you!" A true man's presence transformed a mob that cannon could not conquer. *Newell Dwight Hillis.*

The Supreme Personality. What is the secret of that immortal story which now for more than sixty generations of Gospel readers has wrought its unfailing spell upon the heart of humanity? It is the central Presence of a unique and compelling Personality, felt through every page of those informal memoirs, which we know by the name of the Four Gospels. Personality is the mightiest force which God can bring to bear upon man, and the Supreme Personality in all history, the most potent factor in all civilized change and progress, is that of Jesus Christ. It is of this Personality that the Evangelists speak to us. In the Gospels, Jesus Christ Himself is the Gospel. And from first to last the spell of His story on our hearts and consciences never lessens. *The Temple Bible.*

III. The Lesson of the Wilderness

There is something awe-inspiring in the natural scenery of the Arabian desert. That desert is by no means, as some might imagine, an extensive and monotonous plain. It is rather a wild mountain wilderness. It is a vast rolling prairie of mountain and hill and valley.

It is in the land of discipline and trial that man learns his littleness and his needs, and is impressed with a sense of God's majesty, nearness and love. These lessons are taught in the wilderness as they can not be taught in the land of indulgence and rest. *H. Clay Trumbull.*

The Benefit of Solitude. No man ever reaches the climax of greatness until he becomes acquainted with himself, talks and counsels with himself, respects himself, plans for himself, develops himself, thinks for himself, acts for himself, goes to school to himself, sacrifices for himself, and crowns himself. He must be alone, and often alone. He must talk with God, he must also walk with the great and good of the people of God; but beyond all this he must in the midst of the silence and solemnity of solitude, frequently commune with his own heart.

Summon the great men of history into your presence to-day, and see if what I affirm be not true! Moses was the great law-giver of the old economy; but you remember the solitude of Mount Sinai, where he was wrapped round with the Shechinah cloud. Daniel was great in Babylon, he towered over all the wisdom of that great empire; but Daniel put solitude into his busy life three times a day. It was amid the stillness of the river Hidekel or on the banks of the Tigris that he reached the wonderful vision of the Messianic kingdom. John the Baptist was a

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wilderness man. It was while on the lonely Isle of Patmos that John the Apostle so lifted his being to spiritual heights that God could put the Apocalypse into his soul. In the perfect human life of Jesus Christ we see the true essentials of right living. There were both solitude and soliloquy in His life. You are familiar with His forty days in the wilderness, and with His midnights in the mountain, and with the scene in the Garden of Gethsemane, with its one lone figure prone on the ground. *David Gregg.*

Our Desert. Is not the lesson for us to-day? There are few of us who do not, sooner or later, reach our desert—the place where we seem shut away from all opportunity, all happiness, all chance of growth. But no soul was ever sent into the desert to waste his life. He is sent instead to win the highest of all the wisdoms of the universe; he is sent there to meet God. Pray God that no one of us, having this supreme opportunity, shall miss it and see only the desert. *Youth's Companion.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

The work, not the worker, is of consequence to the world.

A divine consecration followed the human dedication.

Truth to John was more than titles, and right was more than royalty. *Henry Burton.*

A new life is the best and the most sublime penitence. *Martin Luther.*

The greatest of faults is to be conscious of none. *Carlyle.*

The morning star fades before the rising sun.

Fearlessness burns its bridges behind; fear, the bridges before. *Poor Richard Junior's Philosophy.*

A man with a message always has an audience. *Chicago Tribune.*

This generation, with its love of "conferences" and talk, needs nothing more than to learn the power of solitude to open visions of God. *Alexander Maclaren.*

As soon as the sinner opens his heart to God in repentance, God opens the heavens and owns him as His child. *Gossner.*

The strong will is magnetic; the weaker wills follow and cluster round it, as swarming bees cluster around their queen. *Henry Burton.*

The herald is not to blow his own horn or praises through the trumpet, but his king's, and is forgotten when the royal progress has come. *Alexander Maclaren.*

This statement of the perfection of Jesus made at His baptism, is a window through which light falls upon His person and character in the years that had been spent at Nazareth. *G. Campbell Morgan.*

If I have a vessel full of holes, and stop only part of them, the vessel will sink as surely as if I did not stop any: we must break off from all sin and turn unto God. *D. L. Moody.*

The ways and paths of the Lord are men's souls, which must be cleared

of the thorns of passion and the stones of sin, and thus made straight and level for His approach. *Euthymius.*

Men have said to one another, "Honesty is sacred; we all ought to be honest;" and some day, lo! there is honesty walking in the guise of a man among them, and shaming every fraud, and cheering every struggle with temptation, as it looks at them out of human eyes. *Phillips Brooks.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

The angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias; for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord. Luke 1.13-15.

The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain. Isa. 40.3, 4.

Jesus began to say unto the multitude concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind? But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they that wear soft clothing are in king's houses. But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. Verily, I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist; notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. Matt. 11.7-11.

And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true. John 10.41.

He must increase, but I must decrease. John 3.30.

For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think. Rom. 12.3.

For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. Acts 1.5.

Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. Acts 19.4.

Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance. Luke 3.8.

Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth. Luke 15.7.

Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts. Isa. 55.7.

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A PERSONAL THOUGHT

When we set barriers across the path, and heap the road with obstacles, and break the bridges, we must not wonder that God seems far away. Our sins separate us from Him. Mountain ridges of selfishness forbid His advent: we must dig them down. The low-lying marshes, where the fog hangs and venomous creatures creep, keep Him at a distance: we must fill them up. We must lift these mean levels into the blessed light. We must set a succession of good deeds across this swamp as stepping-stones to God. Certain it is that no man ever made the way of the Lord straight, and waited in vain for the Lord's coming. *George Hodges.*

THE LESSON SUMMARY

The banks of the Jordan were John's pulpit, the desert his home; when his message was delivered he retired again into the wilderness. His food was locusts and wild honey; there was not a beggar who did not fare better than he. . . . Day after day, as he came out of the desert and stood on the banks of that famous river, you could hear his voice rolling out, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Many wonderful scenes had been enacted at that stream. Naaman had washed away his leprosy there; Elijah and Elisha had crossed it dry-shod; Joshua had led through its channel the mighty host of the redeemed on their journey from Egypt into the promised land, but it had never seen anything like this: men, women, and children, mothers with babies in their arms, Scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees, publicans and soldiers, flocked from Judea, Samaria, and Galilee, to hear this lonely wilderness prophet.

One day there came down from Jerusalem the members of an influential committee, appointed by the chief priests. Pushing their way up to him, they said, "We have been sent to inquire who you are. Are you the long-looked-for Messiah?" What an opportunity he had to pass himself off as the Christ! But he replied to the committee: "Take back word to those who sent you: I am Mr. Nobody. I am a voice to be heard, and not to be seen."

Do you know what happened the next day? One of the most exciting things that ever took place. . . . John pauses suddenly in the midst of a sentence, the bold rugged man shrinks back, and as he stands silent and amazed, every eye is upon him. . . . The crowd gives way before a Man who approaches the Jordan and addressing John, asks to be baptized. "Baptize you?" he remonstrates, "I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou to me?" The Master said, "Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness;" and they both went down into the Jordan and Jesus was baptized by John.

And as they came out of the water, the Spirit descended like a dove and abode upon Him, and the voice of Jehovah, which had been silent

on earth for centuries, was heard saying from Heaven, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."

What a day that must have been! You have seen the moon shine in the early morning; but as the sun ascends the moon fades away. So now John fades away. The man's light is borrowed. All it can do is to reflect the light of the sun. From that day John changes his text. He had preached "Repent;" but now his text is, "Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world." *D. L. Moody.*

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Compare John the Baptist with Elijah.
2. Compare John the Baptist with Whitefield, "who stirred the whole nation in his day."
3. What did John accomplish?
4. Christ's obedience to the law.
5. He who would preach repentance with power should not be clothed in purple and fine linen.
6. Revivals.
7. Should warnings and denunciations be a part of preaching?
8. Other forerunners.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Explain the first temptation; the second; the third. 2. What is the meaning of the word *tempt* in verse 7? 3. Where in the Old Testament is the quotation in verse 4 found? (Deut. 8.3.) 4. Where in the Psalms is the quotation in verse 6 found? (Psa. 91.12, 13.) 5. Where is the quotation in verse 7 found? (Deut. 6.16.) 6. Where is the quotation in verse 10 found? (Deut. 6.13.) 7. What does James say in the first twelve verses of the first chapter about enduring temptation? 8. Commit to memory Hebrews 4.15. 9. Make a list of the chief events of Christ's life that fall under *Part II, the Preparation for the Public Ministry* (from the coming of John the Baptist to the public appearance of Jesus in Jerusalem). (Matt. 3.1-17; 4.1-11; Mark 1.2-13; Luke 3.1-23; 4.1-13; John 1.19-51; 2.1-12.)

BETWEEN LESSON IV AND LESSON V

The next lesson immediately follows this lesson. "From the Jordan to the wilderness with its wild beasts," says Edersheim, "from the devout acknowledgment of the Baptist, the consecration and filial prayer of Jesus, the descent of the Holy Spirit, and the heard testimony of Heaven, to the utter forsakenness, the felt want and weakness of Jesus, and the assaults of the devil—no contrast more striking could be conceived."

LESSON V—FEBRUARY 4

THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS

Matt. 4.1-11. (Read Mark 1.12-13; Luke 4.1-13.) Commit v. 4.

Golden Text

In all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Heb. 4.15.

Time: A. D. 27.

Place: The Wilderness of Judea. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 13, 14, and 39.

LESSON TEXT. MATTHEW 4.1-11

1 Then was Jesus led up of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.
2 And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred.
3 And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.
4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.
5 Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple.
6 And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in *their* hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.
7 Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.
8 Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;
9 And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.
10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.
11 Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *Then.* This implies close connection with the events narrated in the preceding chapter. *Led up of the Spirit.* A power mightier than His own human will was urging Him on. *Plumptre.*

2. *Forty days.* It may be noted that Luke describes the Temptation as continuing through the whole period, so that what is recorded is but the crowning conflict, gathering into one the struggles by which it had been preluded. *Plumptre. Afterwards an hungred.* There was no food to be had in the desert, but Jesus in His preoccupation had not at first missed it.

3. *These stones.* The stones lying about in the wilderness. "The Tempter introduces his lever into the immediate situation of the moment."

4. *It is written.* The first recorded words of Jesus after entering on His ministry proclaim the authority of the Scriptures. *Man shall not live by bread alone.* The words are from Deut. 8.3, in the speech made by Moses to the children of Israel after they had crossed the desert and were about to enter the Promised Land. Jesus quoted from the Greek version, while our version is a translation from the Hebrew and slightly different. *By every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.* In other words, by the will of God.

5. *The devil taketh him up into the holy city.* As St. Paul said of like spiritual experiences of his own (2 Cor. 12.2), so we must say of this, "Whether it was in the body, or out of the body, we know not; God knoweth." *Plumptre. The holy city.* An affectionate reference to Jerusalem. *Pinnacle of the Temple.* There were two wings to the Temple; the higher one on the south made by building up solid walls of masonry from the valley below. From the roof of the portico above this wing, to the Kedron Valley, was a depth of four hundred and fifty feet.

6. Here the tempter, who now himself grasps the weapon of Scripture, which has just been used against him, cunningly applies the typical expression in the Psalms strictly to the Messiah. *Meyer.*

7. *It is written again.* πάλιν, *again,* has here the force of *on the other hand. Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.* The word *tempt* here means *test.* The meaning of the sentence is "Do not let it be a question whether God will save thee from dangers on which thou hast entered uncalled." *Meyer.* The quotation is from Deut. 6.16.

10. *Get thee hence.* The suggestions of worldly wisdom always roused in Him passionate aversion. Christ's final word to the tempter is an absolute, peremptory, Begone. Yet He condescends to support His authoritative negative by a Scripture text, again from Deut. (6.13), slightly adapted. *Expositor's Greek Testament.*

11. *The devil leaveth him.* Nothing was to be made of one who would not do evil that good might come. *Expositor's Greek Testament.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

The Meaning of the Three Temptations. The Reverend J. Campbell Morgan in *The Crises of the Christ:—*

The First Temptation. In the first attack of Satan upon Christ, the

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objective point is His loyalty to the will of God. This does not appear on the surface, and in that fact there is marked the method of the enemy. He never foreannounces the point against which his attack is to be directed. Thou art hungry, according to divine arrangement, he says in effect, but in the divine arrangement of this moment there is no provision for the satisfaction of Thy hunger. It is now competent for Thee to act upon Thine own initiative; command that these stones become bread. If that experience of forty days ago was really anything more than a phantasy, a vision; if what the voice declared be true, why remain hungry? What is the use of a position without its privileges? What value is there in being the Son of God unless Thou shalt make use of all that the name implies? The subtlety of the temptation lies within the fact that the devil suggested to Christ that He should satisfy a perfectly legitimate craving in an illegitimate way.

The Second Temptation. Having endeavored to seduce Jesus from His position of unswerving loyalty to the will of God, the devil now flings all the force of his subtle art against that which was the strength of His abiding in the will of God, namely, His perfect confidence in God. "Cast thyself down." It is a direct attempt to force Jesus to act upon that principle of trust. The plausibility and force of the temptation is even more vividly seen in the argument which the devil makes use of, *If thou art the son of God.* This is the same argument used in the previous temptation, but almost certainly with a different emphasis. In the first in all probability it lay upon the word *art.* "If Thou *art* the Son of God." Here it seems as though it must have been upon the word "God." "If Thou art the Son of *God.*" The emphasis would be upon the nature of God. In the first temptation He has proved the fact of His relationship. Now the appeal is to that relationship. He is prepared to enlarge upon the goodness of God, and the care He bestows upon such as put their trust in Him.

The Third Temptation. Conveying Jesus to some high mountain peak, the devil showed Him *all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them.* By some strange power, at the command of the enemy, he made to pass before the vision of Christ a gorgeous and magnificent scene. By the very temptation Satan seems to lay claim to a title, which Jesus Himself gave him incidentally at a later period, "the prince of the world." The fact of his sway is undisputed. He was then, as he is to-day, exercising authority over all those who are in darkness, and he is perpetually paying his price to those who serve him. If Judas desires thirty pieces of silver, the devil will find them for him, on condition.

The devil pointed them out a short cut to a divine destination. Christ knew that those kingdoms were assured to Him in the program of His Father's will, but He knew also that in that same program lay the unutterable agony of the immeasurable darkness, and the fierceness of the temptation lay in the suggestion that all the splendors of these possessions

might yet be His, without the pathway of shame and suffering and death.

2. *When he had fasted.* Longfellow in his *Christus* represents Satan before tempting Christ as speaking as follows:—

"Not as a terror and a desolation,
Not in my natural shape, inspiring fear
And dread, will I appear;
But in soft tones of sweetness and persuasion,
A sound as of a fall of mountain streams,
Or voices heard in dreams.

"He sitteth there in silence, worn and wasted
With famine, and uplifts His hollow eyes
To the unpitying skies;
For forty days and nights He hath not tasted
Food or drink, His parted lips are pale,
Surely His strength must fail."

4. *Man shall not live by bread alone.* There are many businesses in life, but only one business of life. Livelihood is not life; a truism that many in our bustling age do not seem to discover to be true. Paul was a tent-maker, but who cares what canvas he pricked with his needle when we read the thoughts from his pen? Amos was a huckster; John and Peter, fishermen; Matthew, a revenue officer; David and Aurelius got their living by kingcraft; Epictetus was a slave; Homer, a declaimer; Socrates, a sculptor; Bunyan, a tinker; Shakespeare, a theater manager; Bacon, a lawyer; Kingsley, a preacher; Stanley, the African explorer, a newspaper reporter; Lubbock, the naturalist, a banker; Stedman, the poet, a broker; Samuel Morley, the philanthropist, a hosier. If a man's life is more than meat, it surely is more than that which provides the meat. *James M. Ludlow.*

8 and 9. There are some will say that we are never tempted with kingdoms. It may be well, for it needs not be, when less will serve. It was Christ only that was thus tempted; in Him lay an heroical mind that could not be tempted with small matters. But with us it is nothing so, for we esteem more basely of ourselves. We set our wares at a very easy price: he may buy us even dagger-cheap. He need never carry us so high as the mount. The pinnacle is high enough; yea, the lowest steeple in all the town would serve the turn. Or let him but carry us to the leads and gutters of our own houses; nay, let us but stand in our windows or our doors, if he will give us so much as we can see there, he will tempt us thoroughly; we will accept it, and thank him, too. A matter of half-a-crown, or ten groats, a pair of shoes, or some such trifle, will bring us on our knees to the devil. *Bishop Andrewes.*

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Do not be blind to this truth—that if you have no higher motive than your own personal interest, it means that your soul is for sale if the price be made sufficiently high. You may disguise this fact from yourselves, but you will not disguise it from others. *President Hadley.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

3. *Command that these stones be made bread.* Bread was made in small, thin, flat loaves or cakes, and many of the stones lying about in the wilderness resembled them in shape. The sight of the stones may have increased the pangs of hunger and thus given greater force to the temptation.

It is written. It was required by the rabbis that a child should begin to learn the Law by heart when five years old. As soon as it could speak it had in the same way to learn the lessons and petitions of the morning service. In a virtuous home no opportunity was lost—at the table, at home or abroad, evening or morning—of instilling reverence for God's law into the minds of the family, and of teaching them its express words throughout, till they knew them by heart. When we remember that the festivals made labor unlawful for two months of the year, in the aggregate, it is evident that the leisure thus secured would give great facilities for domestic instruction. *Cunningham Geikie, The Life of Christ.*

A Scroll of the Law

It is pathetic to think that Jesus never possessed a Bible of His own; but there can be no doubt of the fact. The expense of such a possession in those days was utterly beyond the means of one in His condition; and besides, the bulkiness of the rolls on which it was written would have prevented it from being portable, even if He could have possessed it. Possibly in His home there may have been a few of the rolls, containing the Psalms and other favorite portions of Holy Writ; but it must have been by frequenting the synagogues and obtaining access to the books there that He was able to quench His thirst for sacred knowledge. Of course it was only the Old Testament that Jesus had to read. His quotations show that He read it in the original Hebrew, and not in the Greek translation. *James Stalker, Imago Christi.*

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. In a picture by Domenichino, an angel stands by the empty cross, touching with his finger one of the sharp points in the crown worn by Christ. There is a strange look of perplexity in his face, as he tries to make out the mystery of sorrow and suffering, for he has never suffered himself, and there has been nothing in his life that can aid him, now, in understanding sorrow or pain.

Had not Christ Himself been tempted, His, too, would have been a nature incapable of sympathy with us in our temptations and trials. We have an interesting lesson to-day about the way in which He was tempted by Satan, and the way in which He gained the victory, completely putting to route the enemy.

For Older Pupils. As we study the Gospels and think upon human life, it becomes very wonderful, it seems to me, how, in the very order of the circumstances as well as in its drift and spirit, that the life of Jesus represents the lives of all men. Just at the outset of our work, to try us whether we are good for our work, God's Spirit takes us into some solitude, some experience which makes us realize for the first time that our deepest life is alone, is ours and no other's; that we can not live in our fathers and our mothers; that we must live for ourselves. That is our wilderness—that first realization of our individuality. In that wilderness every one meets the same devil that Jesus did. And the temptation is the same; the assurance given in some form or other that bread is all that one needs, that everything else is a delusion. *Phillips Brooks.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. It Is Written

Christ's Familiarity with the Scriptures. No one can follow Christ, in His temptation in the wilderness, and study the way in which He overcame His adversary with the sword of the spirit, without a greater desire to possess and use that sword himself. With marvelous facility Christ afterwards made use of the Old Testament Scriptures to enrich His teaching and enforce His doctrines. He had learned to know the Scriptures as a boy in His home at Nazareth.

Our Familiarity with the Scriptures. There are multitudes of Mohammedan school-boys who can quote the six thousand verses of the Koran, their sacred scriptures, and can write every word of them from memory. Often equally surprising is the ignorance of the Bible among Christians. College professors have shown, by actual tests, that most undergraduates have a very indefinite knowledge of the Scriptures. Without a knowledge of the Book of books there can be no growth in a Christian life; a neglected Bible means a losing Christian warfare.

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The Power of Bible Words. From *The Youth's Companion* comes this forceful lesson:—"No one who heard the elegant and scholarly address in which Secretary Hay welcomed the members of the International Peace Congress, or who read the oration in print, can have failed to notice how freely the speaker drew upon the Scriptures for illustration, or warning, or metaphor, or other telling effect. When Senator Hoar died, the newspapers, from one end of the country to the other, commented upon his broad and deep scholarship; and yet there was no way in which that scholarship so frequently exhibited itself in his speeches as in the aptness and force with which he quoted Scripture. His great speech on the Philippine policy was a notable illustration.

"Is it not rather strange that familiarity with the Scripture always produces on an audience the impression of learning, of cultivation? Does the fact not give young men something to consider? That impression is produced by reason of the fact that a thorough knowledge of the Bible *is* culture, *is* learning. The Bible is the poor man's greatest university, for it is absolutely free, and it fulfils the highest ideal of education — character and knowledge together."

II. The Value of Testing

The Value of Christ's Testing. With Him, evil was not a thing He had read about in books, but a living reality that He had met and mastered. And having fought and conquered, He stood forth, a Brother, full of sympathy, and with tender hands He lifted the transgressor, led him along the pathway of thorns and pains toward the far off heights of holiness. And to-day there is no youth who hath been snared by temptation, not one who has lost all hope in himself, but can lift his eyes toward Christ, Who knew, Himself, the *Via Dolorosa*, and with the sympathy of a divine Saviour whispers, "Out of every temptation I will make a way of escape, that you may be able to bear it." *Newell Dwight Hillis.*

The Value of Our Testing. We are often surprised at the way some people bear temptation. We had not thought them capable of such nobility of character, for under more favorable circumstances the best that was in them had lain hidden. A ship may cross the ocean many times in fair weather, but not until it has been tested by a storm and has withstood its fury, do its owners know its strength is sufficient for its course.

Every time we overcome a temptation we are made stronger to withstand the next assault. "As the Sandwich Islander believes that the strength and valor of the enemy he kills passes into himself," says Emerson, "so we gain the strength of the temptation we resist." "The iron sheets in a great tube factory are brought to a white heat, and rolled, and welded, and cut, and hammered, and tested, until the tubes of iron ring like a silver bell, and are strong and fit to conduct the pure water, without any taste of the vessel through which it flows."

"For the reason that I have come in contact with evil, I am more truly an optimist," writes Helen Keller. "I can say with conviction that the struggle which evil necessitates is one of the greatest blessings. It makes us strong and helpful."

Was the trial sore?
Temptation sharp? thank God a second time!
Why comes temptation but for man to meet
And master, and make crouch beneath his feet,
And so be pedestaled in triumph? *Robert Browning.*

III. Safeguards Against Temptations

Keep away from Temptation. "Pray that ye enter not into temptation" was Christ's counsel to Peter, and in the prayer that He taught the disciples He said, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." "No man," said Ruskin, "can ask honestly or hopefully to be delivered from temptation unless he has himself honestly and firmly determined to do the best he can to keep out of it."

"What would you do if you were in such and such a situation," asked some one of Mr. Moody, explaining to him a difficult moral predicament. "I wouldn't get into it," was his reply.

Said Henry Ward Beecher, "Men should deal with themselves as they do who carry dynamite to and fro. A man who is laden with explosive materials does not go into foundries and blacksmith shops. He does not resort to places where sparks are flying abroad."

The Warning of the Moth. The little fluttering moth leaves us a warning. If the window is left open on a warm summer evening, after the lights are lit, you may often see moths flying in and dashing themselves against the gaslight or lamp. They will try again and again to make their way past the glass globe, and often they will persevere in this folly till they drop, burnt and shriveled, on the table. You think you would never be so stupid as a crazy moth. But even grown men and women, who know better, are often every bit as foolish. God has given them minds and consciences, and yet they let themselves be dazzled and destroyed by the fascination of sin, as the moth is by the flame. *Martin Lewis.*

Resist the First Thought of Sin. "There are four stages to every deed of wickedness before the deed is done," says Canon Farrar in his *Voice from Sinai;* "and at each stage resistance becomes less easy. First comes the film or shadow of an evil thought floating vaguely through the mind. If it be suffered to stay in the mind unrebuked, there follows complacency in, and entertainment of it. Then, though the law condemns it, and conscience cites the law, the passions rush in and bribe the judgment to give its vote and assent to sin. Then follows that depravation of the will without which defiance of the conscience is impossible; and then, indeed, the evil deed is certain."

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There is a well-known fable which illustrates how a temptation yielded to in a slight degree gains complete mastery. One cold night a camel, fastened by a long tether, thrust his nose into his master's tent, and said: "It is very cold,—let me put my nose within the tent"; and the indulgent master consented. Then the camel said: "It grows colder—let me thrust in my whole head." Soon the camel wished to put his neck under cover, and this permission was given. But when the camel, growing bolder, pushed in his whole ungainly body his master remonstrated, saying, "There is not room enough for thee and me." "It is verily so," replied the camel; "you may go out of the tent,—I shall remain."

SENTENCE SERMONS

We should love and live God's word.

The cross of contest must come before the crown of conquest.

Christ chose to tread the path that led, not to a coronation, but to a crucifixion.

Triumphs over temptations strengthen for future struggles.

For great missions the preparation is great trials. *Elijah Horr.*

Some temptations come to the industrious, but all temptations attack the idle. *Spurgeon.*

Men are all temptable, but they are not on that account all contemptible. *Beecher.*

Wheat that will not be bruised can not be used. *Chicago Tribune.*

Apply thyself wholly to the Scriptures, and apply the Scriptures wholly to thyself. *Bengal.*

It is not when the cable lies coiled up on the deck that you know how strong or how weak it is; it is when it is put to the test. *Beecher.*

In the hour of temptation he who sacrifices the higher duty to the lower pleasure will find that ease has shorn away the strength of Samson. *Hillis.*

The only safe way to treat a temptation that has begun to meet us frequently is the way of the wise book: "Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass on." *Tennis S. Hamlin.*

There has been no master of English literature during the last three centuries who has not been also a master of the English Bible. *A Harvard Professor.*

The whole hope of human progress is suspended on the ever-growing influence of the Bible. *William H. Seward.*

To go into temptation to find out strong you are is as wise as to go before a mirror with closed eyes to see how you look. *Ivan Panin.*

I will never presume, because I am a man; I will never despair, because I have a God. *Feltham.*

Find out what your temptations are, and you will find out largely what you are yourself. *Beecher.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. John 4.34.

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. 2 Tim. 3.16.

The world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever. 1 John 2.17.

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. James 1.12.

Pray, lest ye enter into temptation. Luke 22.46.

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. 1 Cor. 10.13.

We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Heb. 4.15.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

The word *character* carries an abiding significance in itself. It means something that has been *scored* or *engraved.* It comes down to us from the olden time when all writing was done with some hard substance, with bone or ivory, with an iron pen, so that every letter was scored or cut into the substance written upon, and the letter so scored was called a *character,* because it was *"carassed"* into the substance written upon, cut in. We mean now by the word certain abiding results which have been scored into the soul of man by the experiences of life, by some searching trial. Temptations leave a mark, and that mark is significant whether we have overcome the temptation or it has overcome us. The temptation leaves a mark, and that is character. *S. E. Herrick.*

THE LESSON SUMMARY

After Jesus had been alone in the wilderness and had fasted there for forty days, he "hungred." The wonderful words from Heaven at His baptism—Thou art my beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased—must have filled His mind with overwhelming thoughts of His Messiahship, and then, worn and weak, the doubt might well come to Him whether, after all, He was the expected Messiah. *"If* thou art the *Son* of God," said the tempter to Him, "command that these stones be made bread." Shall He work a miracle for Himself, shall He count His power to do this a

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better proof of His Sonship than the words of God? He puts away the temptation and answers, "It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

More subtly the devil tempts Him the second time. He will not distrust God, why not show His perfect trust in Him by casting Himself down from the pinnacle of the temple, and thus attract attention to Him as the One of Whom the angels of Heaven have charge? "It is written," said Jesus, "Thou shalt not tempt (or put to the test) the Lord thy God."

The third temptation is an appeal to His ambition, an appeal to Him to act independently of God. The nation was expecting a Messiah who would be an earthly king; why not meet its expectations, win the people to Him as loyal subjects, and then lead them on to higher and better things? Why not use worldly methods to attain heavenly results? To yield to this temptation would be to worship Satan in exchange for the kingdoms of the world. "Get thee hence, Satan:" Jesus exclaims, "for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." His will was wholly subordinate to God's will. The victory was won, and angels came and ministered unto Him.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The harm of half-truths.
2. How Christ's temptation helps us.
3. Privileges versus responsibilities of sonship with God.
4. The subtlety of temptations.
5. Noble and ignoble ambitions.
6. Man shall not live by bread alone. The fundamental craving of human life, Jesus well knows, is for capacity, inspiration, regeneration, personality, power. *Francis Greenwood Peabody.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Make a list of the chief events in Christ's life that fall under *Part II, The Preparation for the Public Ministry,* from the coming of John the Baptist to the public appearance of Jesus in Jerusalem. (Matt. 3.1-17; 4.1-11; Mark 1.2-13; Luke 3.1-23; 4.1-13; John 1.19-51; 2.1-12.) 2. Make a list of the chief events in Christ's life that fall under *Part III, The Early Judean Ministry,* from the public appearance of Jesus in Jerusalem to His return to Galilee. (John 2.13-25; 3.1-36; 4.1-42; Matt. 4.17; Mark 1.14, 15; Luke 3.19, 20; 4.14, 15.) 3. What other names were given to the Lake of Gennesaret? (Sea of Galilee, Sea of Tiberias, Sea of Chinneroth.) 4. When had Peter and Andrew first seen Jesus? (John 1.35-51.) 5. What did Peter mean by his words in verse 8? 6. In connection with Peter's remark in verse 8, look up Isaiah 6.5 and Job 42.5, 6. 7. What did Christ mean by "catching men"? 8. What figure of

speech is used in Psa. 78.71, 72? Why was this figure as familiar to David as the figure of verse 10 was to Peter? 9. Read the call of the prophet Amos in Amos 7.14, 15. 10. Tell the parable of the fish net. (Matt. 15.47-50.) 11. What examples of ready obedience have been given in the lessons already studied? What two examples in the next lesson?

BETWEEN LESSON V AND LESSON VI

Most of the intervening events are narrated by John only. The Baptist bore his testimony to Jesus as the Messiah. To two of his disciples (Andrew and probably John) he said, "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world," and they followed Jesus. Andrew sought his brother Simon and brought him to Jesus. The next day Jesus saw Philip, and bade him follow Him. Philip sought Nathanael and said unto him, "We have found Him, of Whom Moses did write, Jesus of Nazareth." "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" asked Nathanael. "Come and see," said Philip. At a marriage feast in Cana of Galilee, the city of Nathanael, Jesus wrought His first miracle, changing the water into wine.

Part III, The Early Judean Ministry, begins with the first public appearance of Jesus in Jerusalem, where He went to attend the Passover, and cleansed the Temple. After narrating His discourse with Nicodemus, John sums up in a few verses some of His teachings—the great love of God to the world shown by sending His only begotten Son, belief in the Son of God, condemnation of the evil. Jesus tarried in the land of Judea and baptized through His disciples. John again testified to Jesus, saying that "He must increase, but I must decrease."

When it seemed as though His success would bring Him into competition with John the Baptist, Jesus left Judea, and passing through Samaria on His way to Galilee, He talked with a woman at the well in Sychar, and revealed Himself to her. Many of the Samaritans believed in Him because of His teaching.

With His entrance into Galilee, *Part IV, The First Period of the Galilean Ministry,* begins. The Galileans, many of whom had seen all the things that He did at Jerusalem at the feast, received Him gladly. At Cana, a nobleman came to Him, and besought Him to come to Capernaum where his son lay at the point of death. "Go thy way; thy son liveth," said Jesus, and the nobleman believed, and returning home, found that the fever had left his son.

At Nazareth, Jesus read the prophecy of Isaiah in the synagogue, and then said to the people, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." He refused to work miracles for them, owing to their unbelief, and they attempted to cast Him down from the brow of the hill, but He escaped and came to Capernaum. (John 1.19-51; 2; 3; 4; Matt. 4.13-17; Mark 1.14, 15; Luke 4.14-31.)

JESUS CALLING FISHERMEN

Luke 5.1-11. (Read Matt. 4.18-22; Mark 1.16-20; Luke 5.14-31.) Commit verses 5, 6.

Golden Text

Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children. Eph. 5.1.

Time: A. D. 28.

Place: Near Capernaum. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 15, 107, and 109.

LESSON TEXT. LUKE 5.1–11

1 And it came to pass, that, as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Gennesaret,

2 And saw two ships standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing *their* nets.

3 And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship.

4 Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.

5 And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing; nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net.

6 And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake.

7 And they beckoned unto *their* partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink.

8 When Simon Peter saw *it,* he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.

9 For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken:

10 And so *was* also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.

11 And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *As the people pressed upon him.* The western shore of the Sea of

Galilee was at that time densely populated. *Lake of Gennesaret.* Sea of Galilee.

2. *Two ships.* Not ships in our sense of the word, but fishing boats. The Greek word is a diminutive. *Washing their nets.* To free them from the mud, weeds, and stones that they had brought up.

3. *He entered into one of the ships.* Matt. 13.2. *He sat down.* The usual attitude of Jewish teachers.

5. *Nevertheless at thy word.* Success was doubly improbable; it was day and in deep water; fish were gotten at night and near shore. Compare John 21.2. *Bruce.*

6. *Their net brake.* The tense is imperfect, was breaking.

7. *Their partners.* See verse 10. *The ships began to sink.* Were in danger of sinking.

10. *From henceforth thou shalt catch men.* The Lord clothes His promise in the language of the art which was familiar to Peter. The fisherman is to catch men, as David, taken from among the sheepfolds, was to *feed* them. (Psa. 78.71, 72.) *Trench.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

4. *Launch out into the deep.* The immediate purpose of the command was to teach Peter and the others Christ's authority, and to test their submission: and in that view the very hardship of it, and its contrariety to their maxims from experience, were the reasons for it. *Alexander Maclaren.*

6. *They inclosed a great multitude of fishes.* Whether Christ by His miraculous power caused a shoal of fish to come to the nets, or whether by His omniscience He directed the disciples to the shoals, matters not. "An immense haul of fish," says Trench, "or a piece of money in the mouth of one of them (Matt. 17.27) are in themselves no miracles; but the miracle lies in the falling in of these with the word of Christ, which has pledged itself to this coincidence beforehand. The natural is lifted up into the domain of the miraculous by the manner in which it is timed, and the ends which it is made to serve."

8. *Depart from me, for I am a sinful man.* Peter recognized the whole force of the miracle, and, with his usual impetuosity, falls at his Master's feet—to thank Him? to offer Him henceforth an absolute devotion? No; but (and here we have a touch of indescribable truthfulness utterly beyond the power of the most consummate intellect to have invented) to exclaim, *Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!* A flash of supernatural illumination had revealed to him his own sinful unworthiness and who He was who was with him in the boat. It was the cry of self-loathing which had already realized something nobler. It was the first impulse of fear and amazement, before they had had time to grow into

adoration and love. St. Peter did not mean the "Depart from me"; he only meant—and this was known to the Searcher of hearts—"I am utterly unworthy to be near Thee, yet let me stay." *Dean Farrar.*

11. *They forsook all.* Whatever it was, it was their all, and therefore, though no more than a few poor boats and nets, it was much; for love to a miserable hovel may hold one with bands as hard to break as those which bind another to a sumptuous palace; and the essence of the renunciation lies not in the more or less which is renounced, but in the spirit wherein the renunciation is carried out. *Matthew B. Riddle.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

3. *And he entered into one of the ships.* It is said that in the flourishing epoch of Galilee, under the Roman rule, there were four hundred vessels on the lake, where now there are scarcely a dozen.

The modern boats are all of the same type, doubtless built on the model of those used by the apostolic fishermen of Galilee. They are broad, with a very shallow keel, are decked at the bow and stern, which are high; have an open well in the center, where a mast can be stepped; and are capable of accommodating from a dozen to twenty men. Under the deck of the bows is a sort of open cabin, where there is room for several men to lie down, and where our Lord was asleep safe from the waves breaking over the prow during the storm. When needful, the boats are propelled by oars; but whenever the wind favors, the mast is raised, and the large lateen sail similar to those in use on the Mediterranean, is hoisted. *Tristram, Eastern Customs.*

4. *Let down your nets.* Peter and Andrew were using a casting net when first called to be fishers of men.

The vessel, though not moored, is allowed to remain motionless until a shoal of fishes is perceived close by, when the net, attached by a cord to the gunwale, is thrown over them, and the boat gently rowed in a circle, the net, as it moves along, entangling a number of fishes. This mode of fishing is pursued chiefly by night, in order that the shoals may not be alarmed by the sight of the net. Sometimes there is a second boat a few yards ahead, with a blazing pine torch at its stern, which attracts the fish, while the first boat gradually pulls round and encircles them. Even without a torch there is no difficulty in pursuing this method by night, for the shoals, swimming close to the surface, have a sheen which is visible except in pitchy darkness. The thickness of the shoals of fish is almost incredible to any one who has not witnessed them. They often cover an area of more than an acre, and when the fish move slowly forward in a mass, and are rising out of the water, they are packed so close together that it appears as if a heavy rain were beating down on the surface of the water. *Tristram, Eastern Customs.*

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

First Quarter Lesson VI February 11

For Younger Pupils. Each of the five lessons already studied this quarter furnishes an example of prompt, unhesitating obedience. The *shepherds* did not doubt the vision, they did not question whether the message directly concerned them or not, they did not put off starting till a more convenient season, but they *came in haste* to Bethlehem *to see this*

Fishing Boats on the Sea of Galilee.

thing which the Lord hath made known to them. The *wise men* did not stop to discuss the meaning of the star's appearance, nor the prophecies of Christ's coming, but they began at once their long journey to find *the King of the Jews.* When Mary and Joseph found the *Boy Jesus* in the Temple He did not murmur, but unhesitatingly went back with them to

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Nazareth and was *subject unto them.* When John the Baptist was preaching and baptizing in the Jordan, Jesus went to him to be baptized. When John wondered, Jesus said to him, *Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness,* and to that law His obedience was prompt and unwavering. In the *Temptation* in the wilderness Jesus met all the assaults of Satan by His unshaken desire to obey the will of God.

Our lesson to-day contains two instances of ready obedience to the commands of Jesus. What are they? Where was Jesus when He gave the first command to Simon? Why had He entered the boat? Where were the other fishermen?

For Older Pupils. The twelve arrived at their final intimate relation to Jesus only by degrees, three stages in the history of their fellowship with Him being distinguishable. In the first stage, they were simply believers in Him as the Christ, and His occasional companions at convenient, particularly festive occasions. Of this stage we have some memorials in the first four chapters of John's Gospel.

In the second stage, fellowship with Christ assumed the form of an uninterrupted attendance on His person, involving entire, or at least habitual, abandonment of secular occupations. The present narrative brings under our view certain of the disciples entering on this second stage of discipleship. One of them, James, the brother of John, we meet with for the first time; a fact which suggests the remark, that in some cases the first and second stages may have been blended together.

The twelve entered on the last and highest stage of discipleship when they were chosen by their Master from the mass of His followers, and formed into a select band, to be trained for the great work of the apostleship. This important event probably did not take place till all the members of the apostolic circle had been for some time about the person of Jesus. *Bruce, The Training of the Twelve.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. Obedience

Unhesitating Obedience. Peter was the man of impulse, the man of action, with a swift-beating heart and an ever-ready hand. To his forward-stepping mind, decision was easy and immediate; and so, almost before the command was completed, his swift lips had made answer, "I will let down the nets." It was the language of a prompt and full obedience. It showed that Simon's nature was responsive and genuine. He had learned to obey, which was the first lesson of discipleship; and, having learned to obey, he was therefore fit to rule, qualified for leadership, and worthy of being entrusted with the keys of the kingdom.

And how much is missed in life through feebleness of resolve, a lack of decision! How many are the invertebrate souls, lacking in will and void

of purpose, who, instead of surmounting waves and conquering the flow of adverse tides, like the medusæ, can only drift, all limp and languid, in the current of circumstance! Such men do not make apostles; they are but ciphers of flesh and blood, of no value by themselves, and only of any worth as they are attached to the unit of some strong will. A poor broken thing is a life spent in the subjunctive mood, among the "mights" and "shoulds," when the "I will" waits upon "I would." That is the truest, worthiest life that is divided between the indicative and the imperative. As in shaking pebbles, the smaller ones drop to the bottom, their place determined by their size, so in the shaking together of human lives, in the rub and jostle of the world, the strong wills invariably come to the top. *Henry Burton, Expositor's Bible.*

Irresolution.

"Stay not to sharpen your weapons,
Or the hour will strike at last,
When, from dreams of a coming battle,
You may wake to find it past!"

Coleridge once said, "I am Hamlet; whenever a new duty is presented to me, my first impulse is to shrink from the performance of it." Are there not many such "Hamlets" in the world? Washington Gladden well says that "No man is good for anything who has not learned the easy, prompt, cheerful submission of his will to rightful authority."

The Lesson of the Noble Collie. A man in Scotland had a large flock of sheep, and when they were brought to the fold one night seven of them were missing. He called a beautiful collie and made her understand that she must find the missing sheep. It was a cold, bleak night, and she was already tired. Running back to lick the faces of her three puppies lying snug and warm in their bed, she hastened out into the darkness. After an hour she returned with two of the sheep.

Again her master called her away from her puppies to search for the lost sheep, and again she started out bravely into the storm. Two hours passed before she returned almost exhausted, bringing with her three other sheep. After petting her, her master commanded her to find the two sheep still missing. She did not hesitate to obey, but she seemed to be taking a last farewell of her puppies before starting forth a third time. As morning began to dawn the faithful collie dragged herself into the fold; one of the sheep walked beside her while she half dragged the other along. Utterly spent, the noble dog then lay down by her puppies and died.

This is a true story of what a noble dog will do. Shall we be less ready with obedience to our Master? Shall we be found wanting in heroic devotion to Him, in self-sacrificing labor for others?

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The Lesson of the Swiss Guard. Tennyson has told us this lesson of unquestioning obedience in *The Charge of the Light Brigade.*

"Forward, the Light Brigade!
Was there a man dismay'd?
Not tho' the soldier knew
Some one had blunder'd.
Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs but to do and die.
Into the valley of death
Rode the six hundred!"

Early in the French Revolution the Swiss Guard had been ordered to defend the palace at Versailles, and no further orders came to them. There they chose to fall rather than desert their post. Thorwaldsen has commemorated this by carving out of solid rock his famous Lion of Lucerne. The king of beasts pierced by an arrow lies slain, and beneath him are spear and shield.

II. Be Ye Therefore Followers of God, as Dear Children

Followers of Achilles. Homer opened up a gallery in the clouds, and there unveiled Achilles as the ideal Greek. It became the ambition of every Athenian boy to fix the *Iliad* in his mind and repeat Achilles in his heart and life. Soon the Achilles in the sky looked down upon twenty thousand young Achilleses walking through the streets beneath. With what admiration do men recall the intellectual achievements of Athens! What temples and what statues in them! What orators and eloquence! What dramas! What lyric poems! What philosophers! Yet one ideal man who never lived, save in a poet's vision, turned rude tribes into intellectual giants. *Newell Dwight Hillis.*

Our Captain. It is a beautiful saying from one of our poets, who is speaking of our birth: "Every soul leaves port under sealed orders. We can not know whither we are going or what we are to do till the time comes for breaking the seal." But I can tell you something more beautiful than this. Every regenerated soul sets out on its voyage with an invisible Captain, Who knows the nature of our sealed orders from the outset, and Who will shape our entire voyage accordingly, if we will only let Him. *A. J. Gordon.*

Unconditional Followers. Some men will follow Christ on certain conditions—if He will not lead them through rough roads; if He will not enjoin upon them any painful tasks; if the sun and wind do not annoy them; if He will remit a part of His plan and order. But the true Christian, who has the spirit of Jesus, will say, as Ruth said to Naomi,

"Whither thou goest I will go," whatever difficulties and dangers may be in the way. *Richard Cecil.*

Two Helps for Followers of Christ. If a man would follow Christ he would lead the model life. But what is meant by telling a man to follow Christ? How is it to be done? It is like putting a young artist before a Murillo or a Raphael, and telling him to copy it. But even as the artist in following his ideals has colors put into his hands, and brush and canvas, and a hint here from this master, and a touch there from another, so with the pupil in the school of Christ. The great Master Himself is there to help him. The Holy Spirit is there to help him. But the model life is not to be mystically attained. There is spirituality about it, but no unreality. So God has provided another great help, our second help: The Model Life analyzed in the Word of God. Without the one the ideal life would be incredible; without the other it would be unintelligible. Hence God has given us two sides of this model life: (1) realized in the Living Word; (2) analyzed in the Written Word. *Henry Drummond.*

III. Thou Shalt Catch Men

Every Christian Should Seek to Lead Others to Christ. In some Sunday-schools there is kept a "Fishermen's Roll," on which are recorded the names of all those who have brought in new members. Bringing others to Sunday-school is most useful work, and it may be the only work you can do. Yet if you are a true disciple of Jesus, you will be eager to lead others to Him. We are members of Christ's Kingdom not merely that we ourselves may receive salvation from the Kingdom; but that we may bring others into the same relationship of loyal subjects.

"Just take a pencil and figure out how many years it would take for the whole world to be converted if each year each disciple were to win one other to follow the Lord," suggests Doctor Schauffler. "Start with only ten million true disciples; how long would it take to Christianize the world? Would one hundred years accomplish the task? Much less. The whole world would be Christianized in seven years."

Personal Work Tells. Hand-picked fruit is the best, and hand-picking is the best way to get the fruit. It is personal work that tells. It is so in business, it is so in politics, is it so in religion. Five minutes of private personal entreaty will often accomplish more in winning a soul to Christ than five months of public preaching. Close work is effective. When you talk to me, you mean me, and I know it. Try personal work. Be a committee of one. Andrew was a committee of one when he found his brother and brought him to Jesus. John and Philip followed his example. When God wanted His people delivered from Egypt, He did not send a committee, He sent a man. *New York Observer.*

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I can do all Things Through Christ which Strengtheneth Me. We can not feed others unless we have ourselves been fed. I have watched a cloud over the bosom of the sea, and it has sunk down till it seemed to touch the waves, gathering them into its own capacious folds; and when, at last, it was full, it rose and the wind drifted it off to land, and when God brought it to the field that needed it most, it gave itself out in refreshing showers. Would you minister to souls? With God you will gather strength, power, and fullness, and will come out of that consecrated place to refresh the world. *Northfield Echoes.*

Training Needed in order to become a True Fisherman. What a book can tell a man about fishing is worth knowing, but it is little that book can do towards making a man a true fisherman. If a man is going to fish for fish, he must become their scholar before he becomes their master; he must go to school in the brook to learn its ways. And to fish for men, a man must learn their nature, their prejudices, their tendencies, and their courses. A man, to catch fish, must not only know their habits, but their tastes and their resorts; he must humor them according to their different natures, and adapt his instruments according to their peculiarities—providing a spear for some, a hook for others, a net for others, and baits for each one as each one will. To sit on a bank or deck, and say to the fishes, "Here I am, authorized to command you to come to me, and to bite what I give you," is just as ridiculous as it can be, even though it does resemble some ways of preaching. The Christian's business is not to stand in an appointed place and say to men, "Here I am; come up and take what I give you as you should." The Christian's business is to find out what men are, and to take them by that which they will bite at. *Henry Ward Beecher.*

Go about Doing Good. Few successful fishermen stay in one place waiting for the fish to come to them. They move about, trying different places. Patience is not all of fishing by any means. Jesus said, "I will make you fishers of men." He meant more than "still fishers." He Himself "went about doing good."

We lack spiritual enterprise. We wait for people to blunder upon us, and then, if we are not preoccupied or asleep, we try to be of service to them. Does not that account for empty baskets, for fruitless lives? Why not "go about" more, asking, "Whom can I help? Who needs sympathy, encouragement? Whom can I try to catch for my Master? Lord, where wilt Thou have me to go?" So in many an unpromising day shall we count for the Kingdom, and catch fish in unlikely places. *Maltbie D. Babcock.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

The Presence of Purity and Power stimulates the sense of guilt.

It is a great deal easier to do that which God gives us to do, no matter

how hard it is, than to face the responsibility of not doing it. *J. R. Miller.*

The King of the New Kingdom called His first followers from the ranks of the humble hearted.

True obedience neither procrastinates nor questions. *Quarles.*

I would rather obey than work miracles. *Luther.*

He who would win a soul must have a winsome spirit. *Selected.*

The printed Word apart from the living missionary has won but few souls. *Selected.*

Poor catchers of fish are not likely to make good catchers of men. *Frank H. Sanders.*

Even a dog that has had his leg mended will bring other limping dogs to the man that was kind to him. *Selected.*

No disciple is a real disciple till he becomes a follower, going after the Shepherd, as one that follows by name, and is drawn by love. *Horace Bushnell.*

Faith is letting down our nets into the transparent deep at the divine command, not knowing what we shall take. *Faber.*

It is to be doubted whether he will ever find his way to Heaven who desires to go thither alone. *Feltham.*

Heaven has its myriads of saved sinners, but they were gathered one by one. *Theodore L. Cuyler.*

Whosoever would fully and feelingly understand the words of Christ, must endeavor to conform his life wholly to the life of Christ. *Thomas à Kempis.*

Obedience has found its only perfect illustration in the Son of God. *W. W. Stetson.*

This is the Master, whom to obey and follow greatens and glorifies the human soul. *George E. Hall.*

That "henceforth" strikes across their life like a high watershed, severing the old from the new, their future from their past, and throwing all the currents of their thoughts and plans into different and opposite directions. *Henry Burton.*

Let us toil till night comes, and we shall not labor in vain, for He who bids us let down the net, will fill it with fishes. *Spurgeon.*

Those disciples to whom this promise was first made were as unlikely candidates for this honor as one may find in any ordinary church. He who made such splendid evangelists out of such unpromising material can do so again. *The Christian Advocate.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. John 15.4.

If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples. John 8.31.

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Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple. Luke 14.33.

For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow in his steps. 1 Peter 2.21.

He which converteth the sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins. James 5.20.

Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks. Jer. 16.16.

Whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be diligently done. Ezra 7.23.

I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. John 6.38.

Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Matt. 7.21.

Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. John 15.14.

He that winneth souls is wise. Prov. 11.30.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

How easily and contentedly we speak of following Jesus, of taking Him as our example. If we realized what it means, it would revolutionize our life. Do we begin to know our Bible as He did? Do we begin to pray as He did? How thoughtful He was for others, how patient toward dullness, how quiet under insult! Do we minister to others and serve others as He did? Think of what it meant for Him to take the slave's place and wash the disciples' feet! Christlike is a word often on our lips. Do not speak it too lightly. It is our high calling. *Maltbie D. Babcock.*

THE LESSON SUMMARY

Zebedee and his two sons, James and John, together with Simon, were washing their fishing nets by the Sea of Galilee, where their two boats were anchored. To escape the great crowd that followed Him, Jesus entered into one of the boats and asked Simon to push away from the shore, then, sitting down, He taught the multitude. "The clear, rippling water playing gently round the boat," says Doctor Geikie, "the fields and vineyards and olive groves behind; the eager listeners, with their varied and picturesque Eastern dress; the wondrous Preacher; the calmness and delicious coolness of the morning, and, over all, the cloudless Syrian sky, must have made a scene striking in the extreme."

To test Simon's obedience, Jesus told him to launch out into the deep and let down his nets. In amazement Simon answered, "Master, we have toiled all night and have taken nothing," and then he added, "nevertheless at thy will, I will let down the net." The result? So great a catch that his partners had to be summoned to his aid, for his net was in danger of breaking. In fear and astonishment Peter fell at the feet of Jesus exclaiming, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." He had measured himself by his divine Companion, and his meaning was that of Job who cried, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

"Fear not, Simon," said Jesus, "from henceforth thou shalt catch men." Simon and the others knew that this meant that they were to lay down their nets, forsake their boats and their fishing, the lake, the hills, and their peaceful homes, and follow Him. Whither? Henceforth to wander homeless, and to suffer privation and persecution, but—greatest of all privileges—to sit at His feet and learn of Him.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Instances of others who obeyed the command of Jesus though they did not perceive how it could result in good.

2. Compare this inauguration of Peter for his work with other inaugurations as told in Exod. 4.10-17; Isa. 6; Jer. 1.4-10; Ezek. 1.3; Judges 6.11–23; Acts 9.3–9; Dan. 10; Rev. 1.13–20.

3. Why were these the kind of men whom Jesus needed for His apostles?

4. How Christ's confidence in these men was justified by their after lives.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. What does verse *22* mean? 2. Why is the plural used in verse 24? 3. Why did Jesus object to the testimony of the demons? 4. Who may have built the synagogue? (Luke 7.5.) 5. What is Capernaum called in Matt. 9.1? 6. What fearful prophecy did Jesus later utter in regard to Capernaum? (Matt. 11.23; Luke 10.15.) 7. What is a miracle? 8. What other instances are given of Christ's preaching or working miracles in synagogues? (Matt. 4.23; 12.9, 10; Mark 1.39; Luke 13.10, 11.) 9. Read the six cases of demons recorded in Mark 1.23-28; 5.1-19; 7.24-30; 9.17–27; Matt. 9.32–34; 12.22–30. 10. Of what had Mary Magdalene been cured? (Luke 8.2.)

BETWEEN LESSON VI AND LESSON VII

There are no intervening events.

LESSON VII—FEBRUARY 18

A DAY OF MIRACLES IN CAPERNAUM

Mark 1.21-34. (Read Matt. 8.14-17; Mark 1.35-45; Luke 4.31-41.) Commit vv. 33, 34.

Golden Text

He healed many that were sick. Mark 1.34.

Time: A. D. 28.
Place: Capernaum. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 17-19, and 107-109.

LESSON TEXT. MARK 1.21–34

21 And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught.
22 And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.
23 And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out,
24 Saying, Let *us* alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.
25 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.
26 And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him.
27 And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine *is* this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.
28 And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee.
29 And forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.
30 But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever, and anon they tell him of her.
31 And he came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up; and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them.
32 And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils.
33 And all the city was gathered together at the door.
34 And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

21. *They.* Jesus and the four disciples.

22. *As one that had authority, and not as the Scribes.* The Scribes constantly cited some well-known rabbi as the authority for their teaching. "Jesus did not say," says Farrar, "as we find so incessantly in the Talmud, that 'Rabbi This' declared that, 'Rabbi That' had said so and so in the name of 'Rabbi the Other.'" Jesus rather said, *Verily I say unto you.* In John 3.11 He says of Himself, *We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen;* and again in John 7.16, *My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.*

23. *A man with an unclean spirit.* Literally, *in* an unclean spirit, in his power, in intimate union with him. *Riddle.*

24. *To destroy us.* The language of the demon overbearing the consciousness of the man. The plural indicated, either the presence of more than one evil spirit, or that this one speaks as the representative of the class. *Riddle.*

26. *Came out of him.* Luke adds, *and hurt him not.* Compare Mark 9.26; Luke 9.42.

27. *They were all amazed.* Mark never misses an opportunity of recording the profound impression which Christ's miracles made on those that witnessed them—the astonishment with which these were filled. (5.20; 6:51; 7.37; 10.26.) *Trench.*

30. *Sick of a fever.* Of a "great fever," as Luke informs us, the physician in all probability using the epithet in its technical sense, and not merely to express the intensity of the fever which had visited her. This is made likely by the fact that in the medical language of the day there were "great fevers," those corresponding to our typhus, and "little fevers." *Trench, Miracles.*

32. *When the sun did set.* This shows that the end of the Sabbath had come. The Jews would not bring the sick on the Sabbath.

34. *Divers.* Various.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

22. *As one that had authority.* It is impossible to appreciate a picture with your face at the canvas; but even His blind generation was arrested by Jesus. There was a note in His words that caught their ear, the echo of divine authority. There was an air about Him, the manner of a large world. *John Watson.*

23. *A man with an unclean spirit.* There are six cases of demoniac possession which are described in detail (Mark 1.23; 5.2; 7.28; 9.25; Matt. 9.32; 12.22), and there is a reference to another individual case, that of Mary Magdalene (Luke 8.2). There are also three general refer-

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ences to the cure of demonized ones (Mark 1.34, 39; 3.11). In addition to these, it is said that the twelve apostles cast out many demons, when they were sent forth by Jesus on the Galilean mission (Mark 6.13). The Seventy disciples also reported to Jesus that the demons had been subject to them (Luke 10.17). *Gilbert, Student's Life of Jesus.*

Have we not seen, in mesmerism, cases of real possession, where the weaker human will has been completely overpowered by the stronger will? when the subject was no longer himself, but his thoughts, words and acts were those of another? And are there not, in the experiences of all medical men, and of ministers of religion, cases of depravity so utterly foul and loathsome that they can not be explained except by the Jewish taunt, "He hath a devil"? *Henry Burton.*

24. *What have we to do with thee?* There is a corruption which resents goodness and hates it as a personal wrong. So the demons who possessed men were never able to confront Jesus calmly. They resent His interference; they cry out; they disclaim having anything to do with Him; they seem indignant that He should come to destroy them who have destroyed so many. There is something weird and unearthly in the complaint. But men are also wont to forget their wrong-doing when they come to suffer, and it is recorded that even Nero had abundance of compassion for himself. *G. A. Chadwick.*

25. *And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace.* It was not by such voices that He would have His Messiahship proclaimed. Such testimony was wholly unfitting and incongruous; it would have been a strange discord on the witness of the Baptist and the Voice which had proclaimed Him from Heaven. And truly, had it been admitted, it would have strongly jarred in a Life which needed not, and asked not even the witness of men, but appealed straightway to God Himself. Nor can we fail to perceive how, had it been allowed, it would have given a true ground to what the Pharisees sought to assign as the interpretation of His power, that by the Prince of Demons He cast out demons. *Edersheim, Life of Jesus.*

31. *He came . . . and the fever left her.* In chronological order the first definite event after the formation of the league of pity is the healing of an illness in the family of one of its members; we read that *Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever,* and that Jesus was called to minister. I remember in the days of youth what a peculiar impression I had in reading this narrative. It was like the sensation of seeing a balloon drop into a hay-field. There was the savor of anti-climax about it. Here was a league of pity for the help of the world; and at its first manifestation we were confronted with the recital of an act of favor shown to one of its members. It seemed like a bringing down of the bird in the moment of its upward flight. One looked at the outset for a cosmopolitan act from a movement with such a cosmopolitan aim. We expected,

perhaps, a mission to Rome, at the least an immediate journey to Jerusalem. It came somewhat like a shock to be told that this ministry found its inauguration when "Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever."

But a little reflection, like a little knowledge, is a dangerous thing. A deeper reflection dispels the illusion. As we study the portrait of Jesus it becomes more and more clear that this seeming anti-climax is on the lines of a plan—not the plan of Jesus, but the plan of the life of Jesus which had been evolved by the Father. When the earthly life of Jesus was complete, men woke to this plan. They saw that the course of Christianity was to be a movement from the home center to the outlying circumference. Why did they see that? Because the life of Jesus was before them, and the life of Jesus had revealed it. *George Matheson.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

21. *He entered into the synagogue and taught.* The morning service began in the synagogue at nine o'clock, and as the news of the great Rabbi being in the neighborhood had spread, every one strove to attend, in hopes of seeing Him. Women came to it by back streets, as was required of them; the men, with slow Sabbath steps, gathered in great numbers. The elders had taken their seats, and the Reader had recited the Eighteen Prayers—the congregation answering with their Amen—for though the prayers might be abridged on other days, they could not be shortened on the Sabbath. Next came the first lesson for the day, the people rising and turning reverently towards the shrine, and chanting the words after the Reader. Another lesson then followed, and the Reader, at its close, called in Jesus, as a Rabbi present in the congregation, to speak from the passage to the people. *Geikie, Life of Christ.*

Although prayer and the reading of the Scriptures with exposition were the principal services of the synagogue, there were no functionaries appointed for these services. There was a president who bore the name of the ruler of the synagogue, who could call upon any one of the members to come to the platform and read the prayers of the Bible, and any one present, even a stranger, if he received the permission of the ruler, might give the exposition or exhortation. It may seem strange that the exposition of the Scriptures, to which so much importance was attached, should be left to haphazard, but the risk was not so great as may appear, because there existed everywhere a class of disciplined students of the Bible whose services could be reckoned upon. These were the scribes or rabbis who appear so often in the New Testament. The name scribe or rabbi does not point to a profession by which a man earned his living. The rabbis gave their services gratuitously, at least that was the ideal they professed, and they earned their living by practising some secular trade.

The scribes, as their name indicates, were in the first place copyists of

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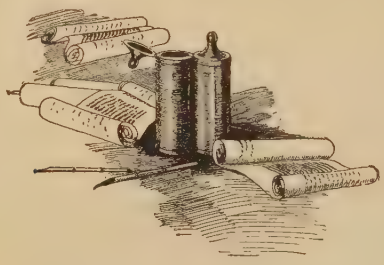
the Scriptures, making out copies of the Bible for use in the synagogues, and also for private persons who might like to have them, and no doubt they would be remunerated for these services. Then they were also the lawyers, for you must remember the law of Moses was the law of the land. But their principal duty was to expound the Scriptures in the synagogue, and in the synagogue the scribe was as prominent a figure as the priest was in the temple. *James Stalker.*



Ancient Books, Pens and Inkstand

30. *Peter's wife's mother lay sick of a fever.* This was a dangerous disease that was very common in that region. The Talmud calls it the "burning fever" and "prescribes for it a magical remedy, of which the principal part is to tie a knife, wholly of iron, by a braid of hair to a thorn-bush, and to repeat on successive days Exodus 3.2, 3, then 4, and finally 5, after which the bush is to be cut down, while a certain magical formula is pronounced."

Turning from this direction concerning incantation, to the account given by Mark, we seem to be going out of one world into another. And, indeed, it is passing from the world of superstition and magic, of darkness and misery and hopelessness, to the world of simplicity, life, health, purity, and goodness. *Edward Beecher Mason.*

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Three years ago Doctor Lorenz, a famous surgeon of Austria, came to our country to heal the little daughter of a rich man in Chicago. Lolita, as she was called, had hip trouble and could not walk. Doctor Lorenz, by means of his great skill, slipped her hip bone into its socket in just the right way, and now she is able to walk like other girls. The doctor has a great heart, and he would have been glad to cure all the children in America who are thus afflicted. He did freely cure several poor children, but he had not the time nor the strength to cure all that were brought to him.

When Jesus was on earth His heart went out to all the sick and the afflicted who sought His help, and we never hear of His turning any one away, for He was able to do what no man could do.

For Older Pupils. There are thirty-three miracles recorded by the Evangelists. "These are, as it were, the nearer constellations, localized and named," says Henry Burton, "but often in the narrative we find whole groups and clusters lying farther back, making a sort of Milky Way of light, whose thickly clustered worlds baffle all our attempts at enumeration."

Our last lesson gave us an account of the miraculous draught of fishes. Before that, Jesus had performed His first miracle, the turning of water into wine at Cana, and had healed the nobleman's son.

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. Speaking with Authority

The Teaching of Jesus not the Exposition but the Text Itself. Christ gave out His doctrine from the depths of His own consciousness, as a flower breathes perfume, fresh, pure, original, and convincing. He certainly felt a divine inspiration in the ancient Hebrew Scriptures. The law and the prophets conveyed to Him the word of God. He used them on certain occasions to repel the assaults of evil, as in the temptation in the wilderness. He used them on other occasions to convince and convict the Scribes and Pharisees out of their own Scriptures. But He never rested on them as the sole and sufficient basis of His doctrine. He was not a commentator on truths already revealed. He was a revealer of new truths. His teaching was not the exposition; it was the text itself. And this higher revelation not only fulfilled, but also surpassed, the old; replacing the temporal by the eternal, the figurative by the factual, the literal by the spiritual, the imperfect by the perfect.

How often Jesus quoted from the Old Testament in order to show that it was already old and insufficient; that its forms of speech and rules of conduct were like the husk of the seed which must be shattered by the emergence of the living germ! His doctrine was, in fact, a moral and intellectual daybreak for the world. He did far more than supply a novel system of conduction for an ancient light. He sent forth from Himself a new illumination, transcending all that had gone before, as the sunrise overfloods the pale glimmering of the morning star set like a beacon of promise upon the coast of dawn. *Henry van Dyke.*

The scribes' teaching was mechanical. The highest praise for a scribe was that he resembled a cemented cistern which lost no drop of water put into it. He was bound never to teach otherwise than as he had been taught. Christ as a teacher was not a cistern, but a spring, clear, abundant, and perennial. *George Holly Gilbert.*

Speaking from Experience. I feel that I could impart to a child afflicted like myself, the power to see with the soul and understand with the heart. All his needs and difficulties would be intelligible to me, since I know the darkness he sees and the stillness he hears. The road he must travel I have traveled; I know where the rough places are and how to help him over them. *Helen Keller.*

Who Can Speak with Authority. One who teaches one thing and lives another can never teach with authority. The power of personality lies behind the teaching and gives the latter its power. One who has

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mastered a temptation speaks with authority about that temptation. One who is mastered by the love of God speaks with power about God's love for all.

II. Miracles

Miracles which Christ would not Work. The most original feature about the miracles of the New Testament (furnishing, perhaps, the strongest proof of their authenticity) is the self-imposed limitation which Christ puts upon their use. Miracles are not worked as specimens of His power, but as manifestations, signs, of His personality. Certain Laws of Limitation may indeed be observed. (1) Christ never works a miracle for a miracle's own sake, apart from an end of benevolence or instruction. (2) Christ never provides by miracle what can be provided by human endeavor or foresight. (3) Christ never uses His special powers to provide for His own personal wants, or for those of His immediate followers. (4) Christ never works a miracle to supplement human policy or force. (5) Christ never works a miracle to awe or terrify into acceptance of His doctrine. *The Temple Bible.*

Nature's Laws are God's Will. A common definition of a miracle is "a violation of the laws of nature." How wrong this definition is, Josiah Strong has shown in his book *The Next Great Awakening.*

"Our faith in God is not faith in an almighty magician or in an omnipotent fairy. We do not conceive of Him as breaking into the course of Nature or as setting it aside. Nor do we think of Him as sitting apart from the universe and watching it as He might watch an infinite clock, which He had wound up and left to run down. God is imminent in nature and active in human affairs, purposing, guiding, overruling, accomplishing. Nature's laws are not obstacles to Him, but rather instruments. Are we to imagine that He is less the Master of these laws than is man? Professor Tyndall used to pour mercury into a red-hot crucible, and in a few minutes, from that crucible, still red-hot, he would empty the mercury a frozen lump. He accomplished this result, not by violating nature's laws nor by setting them aside, but by an intimate knowledge and skilful use of them. The course of nature is not fixed to the limited intelligence of man; why should it be fixed to the infinite intelligence of God? We boast that nature's forces have become our servants, which run to and fro in the earth to do our bidding; and are we to suppose that God is the helpless slave of our servants? Then is man mightier than the Almighty!

"We see that nature's processes are God's methods; her harmonies, His reason; her beauties, His thoughts; her wonders, His wisdom; her forces, His power; her laws, His will."

Miracles of Nature. For wise men it is no more difficult to think of a growing engine than a growing oak. What if to-morrow an en-

gineer should plant a cannon ball. Having watered it well, and kept the ground loose through hoe or spade, suppose that when a few weeks have passed the outline of a smokestack should push through the soil, to be followed a little later by a rudimentary steam whistle, the outline of a boiler, and, rising through the sod, rude drive-wheels, and cylinders, until after six months the great engine should stand forth in full completion. This phenomenon would be no more wonderful than that which actually goes on before man's blind eyes, when a tiny seed enlarges into the big tree of California, and constructs a vegetable engine that lifts thousands of hogsheads of water up to the topmost boughs without any rattle of chains or din of machinery. *Newell Dwight Hillis.*

The Message of the Miracle. Significant is the term by which Saint John very frequently names the miracles. These are constantly for him simply "works"; as though the wonderful were only the natural form of working for Him who is dwelt in by all the fullness of God; He must, out of the necessity of His higher being, bring forth these works greater than man's.

All *is* wonder; to make a man is at least as great a marvel as to raise a man from the dead. The seed that multiplies in the furrow is as the bread that multiplies in Christ's hands. The miracle is not *greater* manifestation of God's power than those ordinary and ever-repeated processes; but it is a *different* manifestation. By those other processes God is speaking at all times and to all the world; they are a vast unbroken revelation of Him. But in the miracle, wrought in the sight of some certain men, and claiming their special attention, there is a speaking to them in particular. There is then a voice in nature which addresses itself directly to them, a singling of them out from the multitude. It is plain that God has now a peculiar word which they are to give heed to, a message to which He is bidding them listen. *Trench, Miracles.*

III. Unclean Spirits

How the Demon of Sin Grows. "Lord, save me from that evil man, myself!" exclaims Mr. Spurgeon. "A garrison is not free from danger while it has an enemy lodged within. You may bolt your doors and fasten all your windows, but if thieves have placed even a little child within doors, who can draw the bolts for them, the house is still unprotected. All the sea outside a ship can not do it damage till the water enters within and fills the hold. Hence, it is clear, our greatest danger is from within. All the devils in hell and tempters in earth could do us no injury if there were no corruption in our own natures. The sparks will fly harmlessly if there is no tinder. Alas, our heart is our greatest enemy; this is the little home-born thief. Lord, save me from that evil man, myself."

Sin-Possessed. When the Reverend G. Campbell Morgan was

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preaching in this country, he gave a striking illustration of the way in which we dally with sin, thinking to give it up when the right time comes, till we suddenly find that instead of possessing the sin, the sin possesses us, and we can not escape when we would. Mr. Morgan was watching the rapids above Niagara Falls and discovered the carcass of a sheep floating down the swift current. Then he saw an eagle swoop down upon the carcass to feed upon it. The eagle had her nest not far away; she knew all about the fearful falls whose thundering already reached her ears, but she knew, too, that there was time enough to lift her powerful wings in flight after she had been borne almost to the brink of the Falls. There was one thing she did not know, however, she did not know the fearful power of frost. When at last she felt that it was time to make her escape she found that her feet were frozen fast to the sheep's fleece, and struggle as she might, she could not free herself. With an almost human shriek, eagle and carcass went over the Falls and were dashed to pieces on the rocks below. "At first we cling to the sin, and then the sin clings to us," reiterated the great preacher with telling force.

All Unclean Spirits May be Driven Out. "Do you know who I am?" said a prisoner to Mrs. Booth. "I will tell you. I am the worst and most treacherous man in this prison." Then, Mrs. Booth tells us, he told her the story of his crimes, his efforts to escape, his insubordination, his attempts to stab officers and to burn down prisons. "Pointing to the chains that hung upon the pillar in the chapel, he said: 'I have been chained up there. I have been put in the dark cells. I have been punished over and over again, but it has not any of it done me any good. Would you like to know what the magistrate who last sentenced me said about me? "Take him away and lock him up like a brute beast, for that is all he is."' Then with indescribable pathos he turned and said, 'Do you think there is any hope for me.' I was at once on ground where I could speak without hesitation, and I told him simply that if he was through with an evil life, if he was tired of wrong-doing and was thoroughly determined to do right, there was a Love that could forgive him, and a Power that could help and keep him in the future. When at last we knelt together, there in the glory of the setting sun, I prayed that God, who could bring light into our darkness, might dispel the thick clouds that had shut in this soul from hope, and bring to him the revelation that would change his life. There were tears in the dark eyes as we parted, and taking my hand in his he said, 'I will try, Little Mother.' He did try, and more than that, he conquered. At first it was a stern battle of an awakened will and conscience fighting against desperate odds. The feeling that a friend was watching and waiting anxiously for good reports proved undoubtedly an incentive. It was not long before he sought and found Christ as his Saviour and became an earnest Christian."

SENTENCE SERMONS

There is an awful possibility of being astonished without being convinced, persuaded, saved. *Moody.*

It makes a great difference in the force of a sentence whether a man be behind it or no. *Emerson.*

Wonder is meant to lead to something deeper, and, if it does not, it only coats the conscience with an additional film. *Alexander Maclaren.*

There is one supreme thing which Christ seeks to set forth with the clearness of noonday before the immortal soul: all sin is unclean, all sin is abhorrent; all sin is deadly. *David Gregg.*

He that hath parted with the past by the power of Christ shall by that power be preserved in the future: the hand which has cut him off from a past of the evil one's, will bind him to a future of his own. *Power.*

Nature is but a name for God's normal and continuous government; and chance is but a nickname for His unseen Providence. *Farrar.*

Christ's miracles are not miracles of derangement, but of rearrangement; not miracles of discord, but miracles of harmony. *Garden Blaikie.*

The attitude of the disciple should become like that of his Lord—the attitude of one who waits not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and the bearing of the cup of cold water to the thirsty will be the delight of all the days, opportunities for which will not be waited for, but sought. *G. Campbell Morgan.*

O Holy Spirit, enter my being as Thy temple, and there fill every room so that there shall be no space for any other to come in: let me be full of Thee, and controlled by Thee. *Thomas K. Beecher.*

He must be blind indeed who sees not in this Physician the divine Healer; in this Christ the light of the world; the restorer of what sin has blighted; the joy in our world's deep sorrow. *Edersheim.*

We have an art, in which a clean and burnished silver plate, after a peculiar preparation, is placed in the camera and receives the image of a human countenance; thus only the hearts which God has cleansed and prepared are able to receive the divine lineaments of the Saviour's character. *Joseph Emerson.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Never man spake like this man. John 7.46.

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Heb. 4.12.

When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils; and he cast out the spirits with his word, and

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healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses. Matt. 8.16, 17.

For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. Heb. 4.15.

I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. John 9.4.

Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Gal. 5.1.

And, behold, there came a leper and worshiped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. Matt. 8.2.

Create in me a clean heart, O God. Psa. 51.10.

He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1.9.

Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles, and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know. Acts 2.22.

And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice, for all the mighty works that they had seen. Luke 19.37.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. For what purpose did Jesus perform His wonderful works?
2. The method of Jesus and of His disciples of attending to diseases, a lesson for modern missionaries.
3. Why did Jesus object to the testimony of devils?
4. A comparison of all the cases of demon expulsion recorded in the gospels.
5. The way in which Jesus always kept the Sabbath.
6. The active life of Jesus.
7. The claims of Jesus.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

God has made the evil, good; the sinful, pure; the selfish, generous; the base, noble. He has made apostles and saints out of men and women that the world would have thrown away as rubbish. Why, the whole New Testament is just a record of that! What God could do in the first century, He can do, He is doing, to-day. *Henry van Dyke.*

These transformed lives are Christ's greatest miracles.

A DAY OF MIRACLES IN CAPERNAUM

THE LESSON SUMMARY

This lesson records the events of one busy day in Christ's ministry. Going to the synagogue as His custom was on the Sabbath, He was asked to teach, and Mark records the astonishment of the people because He taught, not as the scribes who quoted others as authority, but as One having authority in Himself. "With authority commandeth He even the unclean spirits, and they do obey Him," they exclaimed. For in the synagogue a man with an unclean spirit had interrupted Him, proclaiming with a loud voice, "Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God." Jesus rebuked him, and freed the tormented one. No wonder that His fame "spread throughout all the region round about Galilee."

From the synagogue, Jesus went to the house of Simon and Andrew, there to find another sufferer needing His help. Simon's wife's mother was ill with a fever, but as soon as Jesus took her by the hand the fever left her. Not only was she cured, but her strength was at once restored, and she rose and ministered to them.

As soon as the sun had set, and the Sabbath was over, "all the city was called together at the door," for "they brought unto Him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils." And he healed "divers diseases."

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Tell the story of the healing of the leper, which preceded the event narrated in the next lesson. (Mark 1.40-45.) 2. Who does Luke say were among the crowd? (Luke 5.17.) 3. What was Christ's greeting to the sick man, as given in Matthew 9.2? 4. Jesus saw their faith, verse 5. Whose faith? What reason can you give for supposing that the sick man also had faith? 5. What is meant by "speaking blasphemies?" 6. What is the argument in verse 9? 7. Read about the joy of forgiveness in Psalms 103.1-12. 8. What was the ancient law in regard to a battlement for the roof of a house? (Deut. 22.8.)

BETWEEN LESSON VII AND LESSON VIII

In His first preaching tour through Galilee, Jesus was constantly walking from one town to another, "teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness among the people. And his fame went throughout all Syria." And there came a leper to Him saying "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." And Jesus was "moved with compassion" and healed him. The fame of this miracle spread, and the crowds that came to Him were so great that He was forced to leave the towns for a while and work in the country. (Matt. 4.3-25; 8.2-4; Mark 1.35-45; Luke 4.42-44; 5.12-16.)

JESUS' POWER TO FORGIVE

Mark 2.1-12. (Read Matt. 9.2-8; Luke 5.17-26.) Commit v. 5.

Golden Text

The Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins. Mark 2.10.

Time: Spring, A. D. 28.
Place: Capernaum. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 20 and 107–109.

LESSON TEXT. MARK 2.1–12

1. And again he entered into Capernaum after *some* days; and it was noised that he was in the house.
2 And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive *them,* no, not so much as about the door: and he preached the word unto them.
3 And they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four.
4 And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken *it* up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay.
5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.
6 But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts.
7 Why doth this *man* thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only?
8 And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts?
9 Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, *Thy* sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?
10 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,)
11 I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house.
12 And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *After some days.* After healing a leper. Mark 1.40-45. *Noised.* Reported. Jesus had sought to avoid publicity. *In the house.* The house

where Jesus lived, the home of Peter or of Mary, the mother of Jesus.

2. *Not so much as about the door.* A graphic particular of Mark's. There were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judea, and Jerusalem. Luke 5.17.

3. *Palsy,* an old word for *paralysis.*

4. *Press.* R. V., crowd. *Uncovered the roof.* ἐξορύξαντες, literally, scooped it out. Very graphic and true to fact. *Vincent. The bed.* R. V. pallet.

5. *Son.* Better, *child.* The word implies, perhaps, comparative youth, or, it may be, a fatherly tone of love and pity on the part of the speaker. *Plumptre.*

6. *Certain of the scribes.* This is the first recorded encounter of Christ with the scribes. *Reasoning in their hearts. Reasoning* here, as usually in the New Testament, means hostile questioning.

8. *Perceived in his heart.* An immediate and supernatural knowledge is thus indicated: itself no slight evidence of His power to forgive sins. *Riddle.*

9. *Whether is it easier.* They are both alike easy to say; the vital matter is saying with effect. Saying here stands for doing, and to do the one thing was to do the other. To heal was to forgive. *Bruce.*

10. *Son of man.* This expression Christ uses of Himself, but it is never used by the disciples.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

5. *Thy sins be forgiven thee.* The desire for getting the sick man into the presence of Jesus is only less remarkable than the word Jesus spoke to him, for here, for the first time in our record, Jesus declared the forgiveness of sins. Called to account by the scribes for this act, Jesus, to prove that he had authority to do what men would call the easier, did what they would call the harder, that is, healed the man. And in this connection, He used for the first time what we must call His own peculiar self-designation, the Son of Man. This name appears to have been synonymous with Messiah. *Gilbert, Student's Life of Jesus.*

7. *Who can forgive sins but God only?* The reasoning was in itself just in its principles, but false in its results. None could forgive sins but God; and for a man to pretend to exercise this divine prerogative, were blasphemy. But all that Jesus had said and done showed Him to hold a divine commission. One who held such a commission could not blaspheme; and when, therefore, He claimed the right to exercise a divine prerogative, He claimed to be more than man—He claimed to be God. *John Kitto.*

9. *Whether is it easier to say.* Thus, to use a familiar illustration of

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our Lord's argument, it would be easier for a man, equally ignorant of French and Chinese, to claim to know the latter than the former; not that the language itself is easier but that, in the one case, multitudes could disprove his claim; and in the other, hardly a scholar or two in the land. *Trench.*

11. *Take up thy bed and go into thine house.* That self-absorption of loss which follows all great anguish; that shrinking up into one's self which is the first and most natural instinct of a creature smitten with a sorrow not unmingled with cruel wrong, is, with most high natures, only temporary. By and by comes the merciful touch which says to the lame, Arise and walk; to the sick, Take up thy bed and go into thine house. And the whisper of peace is almost invariably a whisper of labor and effort; there is not only something to be suffered, but something to be done. *Dinah Muloch Craik.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

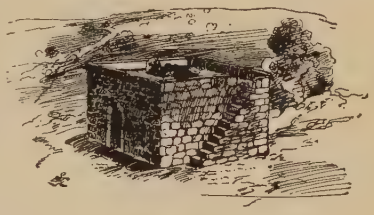
1. *It was noised that he was in the house.* Curiosity is a prominent trait of oriental character. No family can have a guest without the fact becoming quickly known to the whole population of the town. The privacy of the traveler is frequently trespassed on by neighbors calling to congratulate the host, and to wish him joy of his guest. Slipping off their shoes at the outer door, they come in, bowing and sliding along until they settle down on the floor in some corner near the door, with their feet drawn up under them cross-legged, and their crossed hands concealed within their flowing sleeves. After having given and received in return their salutations, they sit quietly, taking in every word that is uttered, by the host or his guest. *Albert L. Long, in Sunday School Times.*

2. *There was no room to receive them.* At the present time, the lodging of an entire Arab family in Palestine consists of one great vaulted, windowless chamber. It was so in the first century. The living room, kitchen, bedroom, must have been all one in the humble house of the carpenter of Nazareth. The masonry was rough, as we may judge from the ruins with which the country is covered to-day. Stone was seldom employed; the most luxurious houses were built of the bricks of the country. These bricks were made by treading wet earth or clay with the feet, mixing it with straw, then baking the bricks in a kiln. Brick houses were common in the towns, but in the country they were inhabited only by well-to-do people. The agricultural laborers and people of the lower classes lived in houses of clay. The walls were roughly wattled with clay, kneaded and dried in the sun, and were whitewashed. On this clay there would sprout, here and there, a little vegetable growth, and on the inside the saltpeter would come out in patches, which the people used to call "leprosy in the walls." (Lev. 14.33.)

The dwellings of the poor were without windows, and even in the better houses the windows were few and small. Those which looked upon the street had thick gratings before them, which could be opened at will. The inhabitants occupied the houses only at night, for in these hot climates the men lived chiefly in the open air.

The roof was almost flat, only sloping enough to let the rain run off. It was surrounded by a balustrade, as directed by the law. (Deut. 22.8.) It formed thus a terrace which served as a place of retirement. The staircase which led on to the roof was outside the house.

Upon these terraces flax was sometimes laid to dry. People used to take the air or even sleep on the roof in the fine season, doubtless in order to escape the insects. This is still customary. The terrace was often covered. It thus formed a spacious room, convenient on rainy days, which was called the upper chamber. When Jesus did not teach in the open air, the only place where He could hold a meeting in the house was this upper chamber, and there can be no doubt that this is where He was when they brought the paralytic to Him, and the crowd, pressing round Him, prevented the bearers of the litter from getting in. The upper chamber still forms the distinctive feature of a Syrian house. It is the guest chamber, where the guest is quartered outside the part of the house used by the host and his family in private life. *Stapfer, Palestine in the Time of Christ.*



A One-room House

An Upper Chamber

4. *Uncovered the roof.* A modern roof would be untiled or unshingled; but an oriental roof would have to be *dug* to make such an opening as was required. A composition of mortar, tar, ashes, and sand is spread upon the roof and rolled hard, and grass grows in the crevices. On the houses of the poor in the country, the grass grows more freely, and goats may be seen on the roof cropping it. In some cases, as in this, stone slabs were laid across the joists, (see Luke 5.19) where it is said they let him down through the tiles; so that they would be obliged not only to dig through the grass and earth, but also to pry up the tiles. Compare Psa. 19.6. *Marvin R. Vincent.*

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They let down the bed. The bed is very different from what we understand by the term, as may be seen by the man taking it up and carrying it away with him. The poorer classes, whether at home or on a journey, use nothing but a sort of mat, or rug, or goatskin, spread on the ground, on which they stretch themselves, covered only by the outer garment, the *ábéih* or woolen cloak. The bed in this passage was one of these, probably of goatskin, with a loop for a handle at each of the four corners. We have often met travelers or pilgrims with such a bed rolled up and slung across the shoulders. *Tristram, Eastern Customs.*

A medical missionary in India says that the road between his bungalow and the hospital is often blocked by the sick that are brought there for him to heal, and the friends of the sick sometimes display the same skill in getting their patients before him as the friends of the man sick of the palsy did in getting him before Christ. As he hastens out at night to answer an urgent call he stumbles over a figure lying in his doorway, and his progress along the road is impeded by a prostrate figure across the way. Many walk hundreds of miles, expecting to have a disease of many years standing cured in one day.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Passengers on a Los Angeles street-car observed a sturdy boy help a lame boy upon the car and then return to the sidewalk, where he kept up with the car as best he could by running. The car stopped so often that he was able to keep with it for several blocks, and the lame lad constantly signaled to him from the window. An interested passenger finally asked the cripple, "Who is that boy on the sidewalk?" "My brother," was the answer. "Why, then, doesn't he ride with you?" "He didn't have but one nickel, and he gave that to me." This should be the spirit of all, the strong should run to help along the weak.

For Older Pupils. In His saying about faith which can remove mountains, Jesus embodies a piece of His own experience; namely, that whatever one undertakes or claims, in the full confidence that it will succeed, is bound to succeed. Jesus praised the Baptist, because he was no reed shaken to and fro by the wind, but a man of strong-willed character, conscious of his purpose in life. Jesus attributes the greatest results to those who do not suffer their confidence of success to be disturbed by hindrances of any kind. *Oscar Holtzmann.*

He must have greatly admired the persistence of the four friends who brought the palsied man to Him. These men might easily have become discouraged on finding so great a crowd, no room even about the door, and if they had told their sick friend that they had done all they could to bring him to the great Physician, but they could not accomplish the impossible, they might have felt justified rather than condemned.

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. Persistency of Purpose

Find a Way or Make It. Great men never wait for opportunities, they make them. Nor do they wait for facilities or favoring circumstances; they seize upon whatever is at hand, work out their problems, and master the situation.

Bunyan wrote his *Pilgrim's Progress* on the untwisted papers used to cork the bottles of milk brought for his meals. Gifford wrote his first copy of a mathematical work, when a cobbler's apprentice, on small scraps of leather; and Rittenhouse, the astronomer, first calculated eclipses on his plow handle.

"Circumstances," says Milton, "have rarely favored famous men. They have fought their way to triumph through all sorts of opposing obstacles. The greatest thing a man can do in this world is to make the most possible out of the stuff that has been given to him. This is success, and there is no other." *The True Citizen.*

The Railroad an Object Lesson. As a conqueror of obstacles, the railroad is a great object lesson. The youth of the country should learn from the railroad the lesson of enterprise and pluck. If, in its prescribed course, a railroad encounters a deep ravine, it bridges it; it spans seemingly impassable barriers with a trestle or a bridge, and goes on its way. If it finds a mountain in its path it does not say, "I can never get over this!" It bores a tunnel through it and comes out on the other side. If it finds cases where trestles and tunnels do not serve its purpose, it executes a loop, or inaugurates a cog road, by which it climbs the heights as if to defy every obstacle. If, in our every day course, we surmounted all obstacles with as great a determination as the railroad leaps across canyons, or bores through mountains, the word "success" would be more in evidence and the word "failure," that is now so overworked, would have a much-needed rest. *The Four-Track News.*

The Example of Phillips Brooks. When Phillips Brooks consulted his college president about what he should do in life, the president told him that they could begin by stating what he could not become, for instance, he could not become a preacher on account of his extreme nervousness and the defects of his speech. And yet Phillips Brooks made himself one of the greatest preachers America has ever produced.

Determination versus Talent or Opportunity. I believe he is richer for the battle of life, in any vocation, who has great determination and little talent, rather than his seemingly more fortunate brother with great talent, perhaps, but little determination. *James Whitcomb Riley.*

This I beheld, or dreamed it in a dream:—
There spread a cloud of dust along a plain;

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And underneath the cloud, or in it, raged
A furious battle, and men yelled, and swords
Shocked upon swords and shields. A prince's banner
Wavered, then staggered backward, hemmed by foes.
A craven hung along the battle's edge,
And thought, "Had I a sword of keener steel,—
That blue blade that the king's son bears,—but this
Blunt thing!"—he snapt and flung it from his hand,
And lowering crept away and left the field.
Then came the king's son, wounded, sore bestead,
And weaponless, and saw the broken sword,
Hilt-buried in the dry and trodden sand,
And ran and snatched it, and with battle-shout
Lifted afresh he hewed his enemy down,
And saved a great cause that heroic day.

Edmund Rowland Sill.

II. Noblesse Oblige

The Debt of Strength to Weakness Recognized. Society is recognizing the debt of strength to weakness. The man who has skill in speech is becoming a voice for the dumb. Those who have skill toward wealth are becoming the almoners of bounty toward art, education, and morals. Men who selfishly get much and give little, who have become Dead Seas of accumulated treasure, are losing their standing in society. More and more cities are bestowing their honors and esteem upon those who serve their fellows. Men are becoming magazines, sending out kindness every whither. *Newell Dwight Hillis.*

Helen Keller, in her address at the World's Fair at St. Louis, said: "In the midst of so much mighty achievement, it is gratifying to know that man has not forgotten his weaker brother. I have come, not for anything that I have done, but for what has been done for me. I testify to what the good and strong have done for deprivation and infirmity."

Superior Advantages Imply Superior Responsibilities. The law of nature is expressed in the modern scientific formula, "The survival of the fittest," which means the survival of the strongest. This law prevails in the life of the lower animals. The stronger devour the weaker by a natural impulse. It prevails also among the tribes of primitive men. The strong tribes exterminate the weaker and take possession of their lands. History is full of the work of this law. Powerful nations dismember and devour weaker nations, as the nations of Europe did with Poland, and are now doing on the continent of Africa.

But there is another law. It is written in the Gospel. Here it is: "Support the weak." "We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves." That is a new law, a law of

grace. It is the law of love. Here is the hope of the sick, the ignorant, the unfortunate, the weak, the lost. There is hope in the Gospel for those whom the world tramples under foot and destroys.

Under pagan civilization men think it better for the sick child to die and the blind and dumb to perish, except where Christian governments interpose. In Christian communities not only are the sick, the blind, the deaf, and the unfortunate saved from the wretchedness to which nature condemned them, but the wicked and the lost are pitied and restored. *The Christian Advocate.*

President Roosevelt once said in a public address that "a man is bound to work for a living if he needs it. If not, he is bound to work for the good of the public. The old socialism was expressed by the phrase, 'The world owes me a living.' The new socialism, on the contrary, is embodied in Mr. Tait's little tablet in a magnificent English gallery: 'This art collection is presented to the city of London as a thank-offering for thirty years of business prosperity.'"

Heaven lendeth goodly gifts to thee,—
Thy Fortune-shield rang silvery;
A fruitful field and golden store,
A multitude would ask no more.
Indeed, a comely thing to see
Is Wealth that weddeth Charity.

Heaven lendeth goodly gifts to thee,—
A fairly-won nobility;
A stately lineage and proud,
With crest baronial endowed.
"Noblesse oblige!" thy motto be;
The guerdon of gentility!

Heaven lendeth goodly gifts to thee,—
Saith one, "I must forgotten be;
Nor fortune mine, nor noble blood."
Thy gift, dear heart, is doing good.
Thy comrade—to Gethsemane—
Is still the Man of Galilee!

Ernest Neal Lyon.

III. The Son of Man Hath Power on Earth to Forgive Sins

As Jesus Healed All Who Came to Him, so He Forgave All Who Asked Him. What a mass of hideous sickness must have thrust itself under the eye of Jesus! Yet we read not that He was disgusted, but patiently waited on every case. What a singular variety of evils must

have met at His feet! Yet He was ready for every new shape of the monster evil, and was victor over it in every form. Let the arrow fly from what quarter it might, He quenched its fiery power. The heat of fever, or the cold of dropsy; the lethargy of palsy or the rage of madness; the filth of leprosy, or the darkness of ophthalmia—all knew the power of His word, and fled at His command. *Spurgeon.*

Confession of Sin Must Precede Forgiveness of Sin. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Our being forgiven depends only on our submission to the condition of the promise. "If we confess our sins," if we fulfil the condition, the forgiveness follows without fail. "The divine promises," as the Reverend Henry Burton has said, "are not checks made payable to 'bearer,' regardless of character, place, or time, and to be realized by any one who may happen to possess himself of them anywhere. They are checks drawn out to order, crossed checks, too, negotiated only as the conditions of character and time are fulfilled."

Hope for all. What's writ is writ; but something further can be written—yes, and it can be written over that which is the record of our fault, as in the palimpsests of former times men wrote one thing over another, the page first cleansed with purifying tears. *J. W. Chadwick.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Not all who are amazed at Christ's power are saved by Christ's pardon.

We are not likely to sue for forgiveness unless we concede our need.

Every noble work is at first impossible. *Carlyle.*

The world belongs to the energetic. *Emerson.*

What the world wants most is not always what it needs most. *Alexander Maclaren.*

Be not simply good—be good for something. *Thoreau.*

Doubts may cloud the soul, sorrow may darken, sin must. *M. D. Church.*

The shells which the sea rolls out on the shore are not its best: the pearls have to be dived for. *Beecher.*

What do we live for, if it is not to make life less difficult to each other? *George Eliot.*

There is not a promise in the divine Word which does not demand or presuppose the confession and forgiveness of sins. *M. D. Church.*

No success is anything but absolute failure unless its purpose is to increase the sum of human good and happiness. *Frances Willard.*

Oh, what a world this would be if the perseverance of the saints were made of as enduring stuff as the perseverance of the sinners! *Selected.*

Talent is desirable; it is the edge of the axe which makes it penetrate easily; but whether it penetrates deeply or not depends more on the force applied to it than on the sharpness of the blade. *William Matthews.*

Hold fast upon God with one hand, and open wide the other to your neighbor; that is religion; that is the law and the prophets, and the true way to all better things that are yet to come. *George Macdonald.*

Men of privilege without power are waste material: men of enlightenment without influence are the poorest kind of rubbish. *van Dyke.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

My sin is ever before me. Psa. 51.3.

God be merciful to me a sinner. Luke 18.13.

Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. 1 Tim. 1.15.

Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases. Psa. 103.3.

Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Psa. 32.1.

For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. Luke 19.10.

And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. Jer. 29.13.

Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. Isa. 1.18.

Now we are sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God. John 16.30.

Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. Heb. 4.13.

We, then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Rom. 15.1.

Behold, thou hast instructed many, and thou hast strengthened the weak hands. Thy words have upholden him that was falling, and thou hast strengthened the feeble knees. Job. 4.3, 4.

I have shewed you all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive. Acts 20.35.

These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them into living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. Rev. 7.14-17.

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A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Christians are bound to make their lives the visible tokens of the invisible change which Christ's pardoning mercy has wrought in them. Nobody in the crowd at the door would doubt the cure when they saw the man shoulder his bed and march away home with a joyous stride in his limbs. Nobody should be able to doubt that we have been with Jesus, and been washed from our sins. *Alexander Maclaren.*

THE LESSON SUMMARY

Jesus was sitting in a house in Capernaum talking to a crowd which kept gathering in ever increasing numbers till the house was full to overflowing, and the surrounding courtyard was packed with people. Four men approached, bearing a man bedridden from a stroke of paralysis, and determined to lay him at the feet of Jesus. Going up the outside stairway, they uncovered the roof, and through the opening let down the sick man upon his pallet. Jesus was struck by their faith in His power to heal, and was willing to grant a greater cure than they asked. "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee," he said to the sick man. A strange remark it sounded to the scribes who were sitting there. "Who can forgive sins but God only?" they thought, "this man speaks blasphemies." Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said to them, "Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, arise, and take up thy bed and walk?" With Christ, to say was to do; he had both healed and forgiven the sick man. Turning to him, He said, "Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house." At once power returned to the palsied limbs, and the man sprang to his feet, raised his mattress to his head, and walked sturdily forth through the excited crowd. The multitude were all amazed, or as the Revised Version says, they were afraid. They had seen how Christ had recognized the faith of the bearers, the penitence of the sick man, and even the thoughts of the scribes. They had reason to be afraid in the presence of One Who could read their inmost thoughts. But they had seen, too, how Christ had power to cure disease and to forgive sin. The paralytic went away glorifying God. Can we not see him, and the four who brought him, "the first Christian Endeavor Society," and all the company, rejoicing and glorifying God?

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The life of a medical missionary.
2. Instances of Christ's timely boldness of speech.
3. Instances of Christ's knowing the thoughts of others.
4. Instances of persistent faith.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. What do the gospels say about the great fame of Jesus at this time? (Matt. 12.15-21; Mark 3.7-12; Luke 6.17-19.) 2. Learn the list of the twelve apostles. (Matt. 10.2-4; Mark 3.13-19; Luke 6.12-16.) 3. Who was meek above all men? (Num. 12.3.) 4. Read Peter's definition of meekness in 1 Pet. 2.19-25. 5. Look up the examples of meekness given in the Subject-Index of your Bible. Under the word *Meekness* look for *Christ, an example of*, also *Examples of*. 6. Tell the story of David's meekness when cursed by Shimei as he was fleeing from Jerusalem because of Absalom's conspiracy. (2 Sam. 16.5.13.) 7. Bring to class several texts about humility, selected from those referred to in the Subject-Index of your Bible. 8. Of whom shall we learn meekness? (Matt. 11.29.) Of whom mercifulness? (Luke 6.36.) Of whom purity of heart? (Psa. 51.10.) 9. Make a list of the chief events in *Part IV* of Christ's life, *the First Period of the Galilean Ministry,* from the return to Galilee to the choosing of the twelve. (John 4.43-54; 5; Matt. 4.13-25; 8.12-17; 9.2-9; 12.1-21; Mark 1.14-45; 2.1-28; 3.1-12; Luke 4.14-44; 5; 6.1-11.)

BETWEEN LESSON VIII AND LESSON IX

To Matthew, a publican, Jesus said, "Follow me," and he left all and followed Him. At a feast of the Jews, thought by many to be the second passover, Jesus went again to Jerusalem. There He healed the infirm man at the pool of Bethesda. Because it was the Sabbath, and because in the controversy Jesus said, "My Father worketh hitherto and I work," thus "making himself equal with God," the Jews persecuted Him. He told them that He acted wholly in accordance with His Father's will, that His claim rested not alone on His own assertion, but on John's witness, on the works which the Father's power wrought through Him, and on the witness of the Scriptures. (The Sabbath controversy is continued by the question about the disciples' plucking corn and the healing of the man with the withered hand, which most Harmonists insert here. This is the lesson for April 8.)

The fame of Jesus became widespread over Galilee and Judea, beyond the Jordan, and Tyre and Sidon. He now chose the twelve apostles "that they might be with Him," His little group of pupils and workers, the nucleus of the kingdom. The list as given in Matthew, Luke, and the Acts, is in three groups: Peter and Andrew, James and John; Philip and Bartholomew, Thomas and Matthew; James the son of Alphæus and Lebbæus, Simon, the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot. (Matt. 9.9; 12.15-21; 10.2-4; Mark 13.14; 3.7-19; Luke 5.27, 28; 6.12-19; John 6.) We now begin *Part V* of Christ's life, *The Second Period of the Galilean Ministry,* from the choosing of the twelve to the withdrawal into Northern Galilee.

JESUS TELLS WHO ARE BLESSED

Matt. 5.1-16. (Read Mark 3.13-19; Luke 6.12-26.) Commit vv. 3-6.

Golden Text

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Matt. 5.8.

Time: Spring, A. D. 28.
Place: Horns of Hattin. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 21, 22, and 34.

LESSON TEXT. MATT. 5.1–16

1 And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain; and when he was set, his disciples came unto him:
2 And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,
3 Blessed *are* the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven.
4 Blessed *are* they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.
5 Blessed *are* the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.
6 Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.
7 Blessed *are* the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.
8 Blessed *are* the pure in heart: for they shall see God.
9 Blessed *are* the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.
10 Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for their's is the kingdom of heaven.
11 Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.
12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great *is* your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.
13 Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.
14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.
15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.
16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

2. *He opened his mouth.* A Hebraism indicating that the words spoken are not the utterance of chance, but of set will and purpose. *Williams.*

3. *Blessed.* The beatitudes are thus called from the Latin word, *Beati,*

blessed, with which these verses begin in the Latin version. *Poor in spirit.* Poor in their own estimation. Only the noble think meanly of themselves. *Bruce.*

4. *They that mourn.* A spiritual mourning is meant. A sense of need makes men "poor in spirit," but a consciousness of the positive possession of sin makes them mourn. *Riddle.*

5. *The meek. Blessed be mild men* is Wycliffe's Version. "Meekness is not exactly humility: It is the attitude of the disciple to the teacher when teaching; of the sŏn to the father when exercising his paternal authority; of the servant to the master when giving him orders." *Williams.*

6. *Shall be filled.* Wycliffe renders this *fulfilled,* in the sense of *filled full.*

7. *The merciful.* The compassionate.

8. *Pure in heart.* Denotes the moral blamelessness of the inner life, the center of which is the heart, in conformity with the view that "Every sin puts a foul mark on the soul." *Meyer. Shall see God.* It is true that the pure shall have access to God's presence, but the thought to be insisted on in connection with this beatitude is, that through purity, singleness of mind, they are qualified for seeing, knowing, truly conceiving God and all that relates to the moral universe. *Bruce.*

9. *Peacemakers.* Not merely *peaceable men,* as Wycliffe renders it, but rather the *maintainers of peace,* as in Tyndale's version.

12. *Be exceeding glad.* The Greek verb ἀγαλλιᾶσθη, to leap much, signifying irrepressible demonstrative gladness. It is the joy of the Alpine climber standing on the top of a snow-clad mountain. *Bruce.*

13-16. This section rests on what goes before, and postulates possession of the attributes named in the beatitudes. With these the disciples will be indeed the salt of the earth and the light of the world. *Bruce.*

13. *Ye are the salt of the earth.* Salt was used in sacrifice by Greeks, Romans, and Jews. It was an emblem of purity and of the influence on others of a holy life.

15. *Candle,* R. V. a lamp, that is, the flat saucer-like Eastern lamp, in which sometimes the wick merely floats on the oil. *Williams.*

16. *So shine, even so shine,* that is, like the city on the hill, the candle in the candle-stick. *Riddle. That they may see your good works. Your* occurs three times in this verse. Our Lord lays stress on personal possession of light, personal action, personal relationship and origin. *Williams. Your Father which is in Heaven.* Note that here, for the first time in the Gospel, Christ's distinctive name for God, "Father," occurs. *Bruce.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

2. *He taught them.* The beatitudes are a portrait of the Christian. They are the King's description of the citizens of His kingdom. The beatitudes are a portrait of the Christ. They are a picture of the face

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of Jesus as unconsciously painted by Himself. The difference between this portraiture of the Christian and the Christ lies in this, that one is actual and the other ideal and prophetic. This is the Christ as He was, the Christ in Whom there was no fault. But this is not the Christian as we know him. It is, rather, the Christian as he will one day be when the education is over and the discipline is complete. *Albert J. Southouse.*

In actual experience the teaching of this sermon is very far in advance even of this advanced age. Men have hardly begun to guess at the glory and beauty of this wonderful ideal, but in relation to the Teacher it is elemental and initial. All the wealth of His knowledge—knowledge that He is waiting to impart—lies beyond anything said here. These are His first lessons. *G. Campbell Morgan.*

3. *Blessed.* To the Welshman the man who is blessed is the man for whom there is *a white world,* i. e., all sin wiped out, the place quite clean to begin again. Does not this beautiful idea help us very much toward a right understanding of the meaning of our Lord? The Christian differs from other men in this, that through the forgiveness of sins he lives in a white world, although placed in a dark world, and can look forward to a white world in the ages to come. *W. Fairweather.*

Happiness is that after which all men in every age seek, and the first note in the Saviour's teaching reveals it as what God is seeking also. How, then, is it to be realized? This section contains the Master's answer. Men hold two views of what happiness consists in, *having* and *doing.* To possess much, or to do some great thing, constitutes the sum of human blessedness according to popular theory. No "blessed" of His lights up for man either the "having" or "doing" of man. *Being* is everything. A man's happiness depends on what he is in himself. Henceforth for the disciples themselves, and for a basis of their estimate of others, character is to be supreme. *G. Campbell Morgan.*

3. *The kingdom of heaven.* The forefathers of these people had belonged to the kingdom of Israel, because they belonged to Israel's race; themselves belonged to the empire of Rome, because their country had been conquered and they were obliged to acknowledge Rome's sway; moreover, they were subjects of Herod Antipas, simply because they lived in Galilee. Here was a kingdom in which race distinctions had no place, which took no account of territorial limits, which made no appeal to force of arms or rights of conquest—a kingdom founded on character. *John Monro Gibson.*

7. *Blessed are the merciful.* The Guild of Saint George has in its declaration the following statement, written by John Ruskin, its founder: "I will not kill nor hurt any living creature needlessly, nor destroy any beautiful thing, but will strive to save and comfort all gentle life and guard and perfect all natural beauty on earth."

10. *They which are persecuted for righteousness' sake.* Our word *traitor* is derived from the Latin word *traditor,* used to designate those early Christians who gave up the Bible rather than suffer persecution.

13. *If the salt have lost his savour.* Christ was giving a clear and powerful call to duty. His thought was not that His disciples should congratulate themselves on being better than other men. He wished them to ask themselves whether they actually had in them the purpose and the power to make other men better. Did they intend to exercise a purifying, seasoning, saving influence in the world? Were they going to make their presence felt on earth and felt for good? If not, they would be failures and frauds. The savor would be out of them. *Henry van Dyke.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

13. *If the salt have lost his savour it is good for nothing—trodden under foot of men.* A merchant of Sidon, having farmed of the government the revenue from the importation of salt, brought over a great quantity from the marshes of Cyprus—enough, in fact, to supply the whole province for many years. This he had transferred to the mountains, to cheat the government out of some small percentage of duty. Sixty-five houses were rented and filled with salt. Such houses have merely earthen floors, and the salt next the ground was in a few years entirely spoiled. I saw large quantities of it literally thrown into the road to be trodden under foot of men and beasts. It was "good for nothing." *Thompson, The Land and the Book.*

Oil Lamps

15. *Neither do men light a candle.* Every house was provided with a lamp, a bushel, some skins for wine, a broom and a mill. It is to be noticed that these various utensils are always named in the Gospel with the definite article—*the* bushel, *the* lampstand. There was but one in the house. The lampstand was very tall, and it was usually placed upon the ground. Sometimes then, as now, there was a stone projecting from the wall and the lamp was set on this. It was an oil lamp, with one or more burners. The poor man's lamp was made of clay. The bushel was an indispensable article in the dwelling of a peasant. It was used as a measure, as its name implies, but it also served many other purposes. Placed on the ground and turned upside down, it took the place of a table, and the lamp was put "*on* the bushel, not *under* it." The family, seated around in Eastern fashion, would see the lamp, and so it would "give light to all that were in the house." In the present day the bushel is used as a table, and even as a dish. *Edmond Stapfer.*

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THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. A woman who lived in Scotland received many letters from her son, who had come to America to make his fortune. Sometimes she found bank-bills in the letters, for her son knew that these bills were promises to pay, and he wished her to purchase for herself the comforts she needed. But she had never seen such bills, and she did not know their value. She called them her pretty pictures and put them away in an old tea-pot.

There are promises of the greatest value in our lesson text to-day, and we must not, like this Scotch woman, regard them as merely beautiful pictures, but we must see how we can make these promises our own.

For Older Pupils. The Sermon on the Mount is the Great Charter of the New Kingdom. In it Christ assumes the character of Legislator. In it a new and greater Moses speaks, giving a new law to men endowed with a new spirit.

He begins by describing the character of the Citizens of the New Kingdom, and whereas in old times, men had done reverence to the valiant, the proud, the strong, the rich, the wise, Jesus gives the chief place to the hungry and thirsty and poor, to the innocent, the debonair, the simple-hearted, to those who did not make war but peace, to those who did not resist evil, but for evil returned good. *The Temple Bible.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. Blessed are the Meek

False Meekness. Perhaps there is no other word so misjudged as this word *meek.* When we speak of a meek person we are likely to think of Uriah Heep, and surely there is no character in all literature that makes us creep as Uriah does, with his maddening meekness. That he was not in reality meek, that he merely used this pretense of humbleness to forward his own ambitious designs, every reader of Dickens knows. As far as the East is from the West is the spirit of false meekness from that of true meekness.

In China it is the custom to belittle oneself and one's deeds. The biographer of Li-Hung Chang tells us that when Tseng Kwo-fan, one of the best Chinese who has ever governed Nanking, was reappointed Viceroy of Nanking he wrote the following letter of acceptance:

"Being of no ability, and having, notwithstanding, been entrusted with the most important duties, I have, as I tottered along, failed to do anything meritorious. When, some years ago, I went to Shantung, I did not succeed in subduing the Nienfei, but returned to Nanking, and was ever after ashamed of myself. Last year I was graciously nominated Viceroy of Chihli, but I made unsuitable appointments, mismanaged the army, and

failed to do any good for the Yellow River. I tremble as I think of my blunders, and in consequence I am overwhelmed by the gracious order which directs me to resume my former important post and thus displays your majesty's confidence in me, instead, as would be just, of reprobating me for my worthlessness and dismissing me."

True Meekness. What, then, is true meekness? The Greek word in the Bible that is used for meekness is the same Greek word that in Xenophon's Anabasis is used for the taming of horses. A meek man is a tamed man, one who has learned self-control.

"Who are the meek?" a boy in Jamaica was asked. "Those who give soft answers to rough questions," was his bright reply.

Chaucer's perfect knight was a meek man:

"A knight ther was, and that a worthy man,
That fro the time that he firste began
To riden out, he lovèd chevalrie,
Trouthe and honour, fredom and curtesie.
And though that he were worthy he was wise,
And of his port as meke as is a mayde.
He nevere yet no vilanie ne sayde,
In alle his lif, unto no manere wight.
He was a veray parfit, gentil knight."

Meekness is Willingness to Take Wrong Patiently. In an hour when noble manhood would have prompted a generous impulse, Shimei went along on the hillside over against David, and "cursed as he went, and threw stones at him, and cast dust." While the king's meekness under such provocation no doubt encouraged Shimei in an increased impiety, that self-control which he then exhibited stands out conspicuously in the sacred record, teaching us two valuable lessons:

First, an inward strength that overcomes all personal resentment is the divine method of conquest. David met thus the fierce assaults of the Benjamite when bowed down under the weight of his sorrow, as he journeyed away from the city of his God surrounded by a royal but saddened retinue.

Such self-mastery is real—that is, the calm within is not that which watches for the favorable opportunity to redress a wrong. After the clouds had disappeared and prosperity had come, David did not seek out the man who had dishonored his person and his throne. He came to Jordan in triumph, but not in wrath. Among the first to offer obeisance as David entered Jerusalem was Shimei. Prostrated before the king, he said, "Let not my lord impute iniquity unto me, for thy servant doth know that I have sinned." The king said, "Thou shalt not die." David was not blind to his guilt. He was obliged to treat him with dignified caution for the preservation of his kingdom, but no one can detect anything

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contrary to a sublime self-control in his subsequent intercourse with Shimei. He won because he first conquered his own secret self. And so it may ever be.

Second, we overcome our earthly difficulties when we regard them as only forming a part of a necessary discipline. When David met this angry and uncontrollable assailant, you may judge that good came to his soul, as looking up, he quietly moved forward amid the shower of missiles. Who will say that we are not indebted to this trying experience for some of David's sweetest psalms? His words to Abishai reveal the spirit of humility and resignation. He felt that God's providence directed his steps, though he could not see how. Such is ever the Christian's life. It is well with us under all circumstances, if we only leave our cause in His hands, and learn that in the training school of this life there is none so near to us as Himself. *The Christian Advocate.*

Meekness is Gentleness. Weakness is always rough. Only giants can be gentle. Tenderness is an inflection of strength. No error can be greater than to suppose that gentleness is mere absence of vigor. Weakness totters and tugs at its burden. When the dwarf that attended Ivanhoe at the tournament lifted the bleeding sufferer, he staggered under his heavy burden. Weakness made him stumble and caused the wounded knight intense pain. When the giant of the brawny arm and the unconquered heart came, he lifted the unconscious sufferer like a feather's weight, and without a jar bore him away to a secure hiding-place for healing and recovery. He who studies the great men of yesterday will find in the last analysis that gentleness has always been a test of gianthood, and fine considerateness the measure of manhood and the gage of personal works. *Newell Dwight Hillis.*

The Meek Shall Inherit the Earth. Shortly before the Civil War closed, General Howard had succeeded another officer as head of a special division. General Sherman had been the commanding officer, and when he was arranging for a grand review of the army at Washington he sent for General Howard. He told the general that the friends of the other officer insisted upon his riding at the head of the corps. "But it is my command," said Howard. "I am entitled to ride there." "Of course you are," replied Sherman. "You led the men through Georgia and the Carolinas; but, Howard, you are a Christian and can stand the disappointment." "If you put it on that ground," said Howard, "there is but one answer. Let him ride at the head of the corps." "Yes, let him have the honor," said Sherman, "but you will report to me at nine o'clock, and will ride by my side at the head of the army."

II. Blessed are the Pure in Heart, for They Shall See God

Because his Heart was Pure. There came once, as we read in Sir Thomas Malory's *King Arthur,* a maiden into King Arthur's Court, girded

with a noble sword; and she besought some knight to draw out the sword, as it weighed heavily and she wished deliverance, and none could free her of the sword save a good knight who "must be a passing good man of his hands and of his deeds, and without villainy or treachery." And from King Arthur down, the knights strove in vain to draw forth the sword, until a poor knight who, "because he was poor and poorly arrayed, he put him not far in press," did assay, saying, "Fair Damsel, worthiness and good graces and good deeds are not all only in raiment, but manhood and worship are hid within man's person." And because his heart was pure, he did draw forth the sword.

The pure man is always the strong man. As Sir Galahad says:

"My good blade carves the casques of men,
My tough lance thrusteth sure;
My strength is as the strength of ten
Because my heart is pure." *Robert E. Speer.*

The Chaplain and the Students. An omnibus full of Parisian students was making its way along the Rue de Rivoli when a priest in his robes of office joined the party. The students hailed the new-comer with delight, and began at once to tell all the objectionable stories they could recall. The priest spoke not a word till he rose to get out. Then he said politely:

"Au revoir, messieurs."

The French *au revoir* means, literally, "till we see each again." One of the students evidently had this in mind when he replied,

"Um," he said, "we don't want to meet you again, old dismal!"

"But, *au revoir,"* repeated the *curé,* "we are sure to meet again. I am the chaplain of the Mazas prison." *Peter Lombard, in Church Times.*

Who are the Pure in Heart? As purity, when affirmed of other things, for example, water, air, glass, means freedom from mixture; so purity of heart means singleness of moral aim, freedom from all alloys, whether of insincerity, distraction, hate. Not that the pure in heart are absolutely sinless: for none is good save One, even God. But the pure in heart are the simple-thoughted, the clear-purposed, the straightforward, in one word, the guileless. *George Dana Boardman.*

III. Let Your Light Shine

Reflection a Proof of Light. In the British Art Exhibit at the Columbian Exposition there was a remarkable picture of a blacksmith's shop. All the homely details: the smoky walls and rafters, the lurking shadows, the forms and faces of the men, showing in the half lights—were portrayed with singular fidelity. But the greatest artistic triumph appeared

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in a marvelous reflection, upon a boy's face, of light from an unseen forge. The ruddy glow, illuminating the sturdy figure and honest features of the rugged fellow, busy with his work, was simply wonderful. No need to picture the red flames of the forge beyond; their existence was distinctly evident. The bright reflection proved their presence and their power. So it is always. A vivid reflection is invincible proof of light somewhere. Should not the children of light give this testimony daily? *Julia H. Johnston.*

How to Have a Light.

Thou who art Light, Shine on each Soul!
Thou who art Truth, each mind control!
Open our eyes and make us see
The path which leads to Heaven and Thee. *John Hay.*

Our Duty to Let our Light Shine. "To give light and save life," the inscription on the Eddystone lighthouse reads. This might well be the motto of every Christian. He can not avoid responsibility, for, as is often said, he is the "World's Bible." "Men are convinced more quickly and certainly by what they see than by what they hear," said Doctor Babcock. "It is not 'Let your lips speak,' but 'Let your light shine.' The living epistle is not known and *heard* of all men, but known and read."

Effect of Light. Life takes on a new aspect when the sun returns from his winter exile. Travelers in the far North tell us that the greatest peril with which Arctic explorers have to contend is the despondency that oppresses them in the absence of light. One needs but to pick up the most finished literature of unbelief, past or present, to see that without Christ life is but a sunless world. The Greek drama, the Roman lyric, the Persian quatrain, have all one spirit—gloomy, desponding, hopeless, because there is no light.

The followers of Christ are not fulfilling their high calling unless they are shedding abroad in the spiritual world such knowledge, good cheer, and beauty as light bestows. He used of them the same words He uses of Himself, *The light of the world.* If the light that is in Christ's followers be darkness, God pity the world deprived of assurance, joy, and grace. *The Interior.*

Lights That Do Not Shine. How many in all our Christian communities are constantly haunted by a nervous fear lest people should think them forward! For one person who makes a parade of his Christianity, there are a hundred or a thousand who want always to shrink into a corner. This is not modesty; it is a sign of an unnatural self-consciousness. The disciples of Christ should act simply, naturally, unconsciously, neither making a display on the one hand nor hiding their light on the other. So the Master puts it most beautifully and suggestively: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works" (not the worker

—that is of no consequence—but the works) "and glorify your Father which is in heaven." *John Monro Gibson.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

The measure of service is the measure of rank in the kingdom of Heaven.

He that lacks time to mourn, lacks time to mend. *Selected.*

Every sin soils the soul. *Origin.*

Pure Sir Galahad can see the holy grail which great Sir Launcelot was doomed by his sin to miss. *W. F. Adeney.*

The best of men
That e'er wore earth about him was a sufferer,
A soft, meek, patient, humble, tranquil spirit,
The first true gentleman that ever breathed. *Dekker.*

The beatitudes are not only blessings to be desired; they are also tests to be applied to the heart. *Van Dyke.*

How far that little candle throws his beams,
So shines a good deed in a naughty world. *Shakespeare.*

Human mercy and divine mercy can not be put on an equality. *Chrysostom.*

God is a beholding and a waiting God. *G. A. Gordon.*

Running through all the beatitudes is this great truth, that blessedness is essentially spirited. *John Monro Gibson.*

Mercy is to count another's misery or want one's own, and to be sad at another's grief as at one's own. *Remigius.*

No life
Can be pure in its purpose and strong in its strife,
And all life not be purer and stronger thereby. *Owen Meredith.*

When the learned are fumbling to find the latch, the simple and poor have entered into the Kingdom of Heaven. *Saint Augustine.*

The creature without desire is a clod; the creature whose life is ravaged and overrun by hoards of clamorous desires, is an object of pity. *Washington Gladden.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

The Lord lifteth up the meek. Psalms 147.6.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Psalms 51.10.

If we suffer, we shall also reign with him. 2 Timothy 2.12.

He that cometh to me shall never hunger. John 6.35.

The Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy. James 5.11.

If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. John 7.37.

My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God. Psalms 42.2.

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Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. Matthew 11.29.

What glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. 1 Peter 2.20.

If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Romans 12.18.

Christ, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously. 1 Peter 2.23.

That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. John 1.9.

Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart. Psalms 24.3, 4.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

"How quick to know, but how slow to put in practice!" exclaims Goethe of his fellow men. To put one principle into practice is far from easy, and to put eight principles into practice demands eternal vigilance. But only by practising the principles of these beatitudes can we "attain to the measure of our high calling in Christ Jesus." If we practise them as conscientiously as ambitious musicians practise scales and exercises, if we follow them as persistently as a golf player follows his ball, if we read Christ's commands and promises as faithfully as a young lawyer reads his Blackstone, if we keep the vision of Christ's life as constantly before us as an ambitious art student does the ideals of his master, then we shall make progress steadily, and climb slowly but surely toward the high plane to which Christ bids us mount.

THE LESSON SUMMARY

When Jesus founded that unique society which He called the Kingdom of God, it was necessary that He should lay down its basis, and this is what He did in the Sermon on the Mount. It was an elaborate and deliberate utterance made to a select audience. It was Christ's manifesto, and the constitution of Christianity. Among all the creeds of Christendom, the only one which has the authority of Christ Himself is the Sermon on the Mount.

"Blessed," said Jesus, opening His mouth with intention, and no one could have guessed what would follow. The world had its own idea of blessedness. Blessed is the man who is always right. Blessed is the man who is satisfied with himself. Blessed is the man who is strong. Blessed is the man who rules. Blessed is the man who is rich. Blessed is the man who is popular. Blessed is the man who enjoys life. These are the

beatitudes of sight and this present world. It comes with a shock and opens a new realm of thought, that not one of these men entered Jesus' mind when He treated of blessedness. "Blessed," said Jesus, "is the man who thinks lowly of himself; who has passed through great trials; who gives in and endures; who longs for perfection; who carries a tender heart; who has a passion for holiness; who sweetens human life; who dares to be true to conscience." What a conception of character! Blessed are the humble, the penitents, the victims, the mystics, the philanthropists, the mediators, the confessors. For the first time a halo rests on gentleness, patience, kindness, and sanctity, and the eight men of the Beatitudes divide the Kingdom of God. *John Watson, The Mind of the Master.*

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Give incidents from the Bible that illustrate each of the beatitudes.
2. Formulate eight beatitudes that correspond to the world's seeming idea of what brings happiness.
3. Compare the principles of the beatitudes with the principles that Paul gives in 1 Corinthians 13.4-8; and Peter gives in 2 Peter 1.5-7; also with "the things which God hates," as enumerated in Proverbs 6.16-18.
4. The character of members of the Kingdom of God as shown in the Sermon on the Mount.
5. Can the teachings of the beatitudes be followed to-day?

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. What is an oath? 2. Does scripture forbid judicial punishment? (See Rom. 13.3, 4.) 3. Are there white and black lies? 4. Where in the Old Testament is the command given in verse 33 found? (Lev. 19.12; Num. 30.2; Deut. 23.22.) 5. Where is the quotation in verse 38 found? (Exod. 21.24.) Did this law refer to private revenge? 6. Where is the first part of the quotation in verse 43 found? (Lev. 19.18.) 7. What does the Old Testament say about allowing retaliation? (Exod. 21.23–25; Deut. 19.18–21; 23.5, 6; 25.17–19.) About retaliation forbidden? (Exod. 23.4, 5; Lev. 19.17, 18, 33–35.)

BETWEEN LESSON IX AND LESSON X

After the beatitudes, there follows in the Sermon on the Mount a comparison of the new law of mercy with the old law of threatening. The old was transitory, this permanent; the old was a type and a shadow, the new a fulfilment and a completion; the old demanded obedience in outward action, the new was to permeate the thoughts; the old contained the rule of conduct, the new the secret of obedience. *F. W. Farrar.* (Matt. 5.17–32.)

THE TONGUE AND THE TEMPER

Matt. 5.33-48. (Read Matt. 5.17-32; Luke 6.27-36.) Commit vv. 44, 45.

Golden Text

Keep the door of my lips. Psa. 141.3.

Time: Spring, A. D. 28.
Place: Horns of Hattin. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 23, 24, 34.

LESSON TEXT. MATT. 5.33–48

33 Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths:
34 But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne:
35 Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King.
36 Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.
37 But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.
38 Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:
39 But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.
40 And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have *thy* cloke also.
41 And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.
42 Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.
43 Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.
44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;
45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.
46 For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?
47 And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more *than others?* do not even the publicans so?
48 Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

33. *Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths.* Thou shalt not swear falsely. (Lev. 19.12.) Thou shalt perform unto the Lord thy vows. (Num. 30.2.) Probably only those oaths in which the name of God were used were considered binding by the Jews.

34. *Swear not at all.* All should have such a love of truth that there would be no need of oaths. *Neither by heaven,* etc. The principle underlying all this is that man should see God in everything. That the creature can not be separated from the Creator. Therefore, that calling any creature to witness is virtually calling God. *Macdonald.*

36. *Because thou canst not make one hair white or black.* As each of the other objects included a reference to God, so does also thy head. For even that calls to mind the power of God, since every hair of it bears the stamp of His handiwork. *Williams.*

37. *Yea, nay.* Your *yes* and *no* must carry weight in themselves. *Whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.* In certain circumstances something beyond *yea* and *nay* will be required of you. But it comes of evil, the evil of untruthfulness. See that the evil be not in you. *Bruce.*

38. *An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.* (See Ex. 21.24.) This was called the *Lex talionis,* or law of revenge. As given by Moses, it referred to punishment meted out by a court of justice; the Jews seemed to understand that it permitted private revenge.

39. *Resist not evil.* To be merely passive, is weakness; but a nonresistance, from Christian principle for the spiritual object, is true strength and real victory. *Lange. Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek.* The literal observance may be Pharisaical, yet when rendered in the true spirit has often most successfully overcome violence. *Riddle.*

42. *Give to him that asketh thee.* Obviously to give to every beggar, to lend to every borrower, would be as hurtful to them as it would be harassing and exhausting to us. Refusal may often be the best gift. Our gifts and loans are to be measured by the welfare, not by the desire, of the asker; and to be made in the spirit of our Holy Father. *Riddle.*

43. *Thou shalt love thy neighbour..* (Lev. 19.18.) The original precept referred to Israelites, and obedience to it helped keep them distinct from other nations. But the Pharisees, to increase the distance between the Jews and Gentiles, added the converse precept: *and hate thine enemy,* meaning by enemy the Gentiles. *Riddle.*

45. *That ye may be.* Such action proves, not makes, the sonship. *Riddle. Your Father.* This new name for God occurs sixteen times in the Sermon on the Mount.

46. *What reward have ye?* What merit is there in it? *Riddle.*

47. *Salute.* A very slight display of love from our Western point of view, a mere civility; more significant in the East; symbolic here of friendly relations. *Bruce.*

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48. *Perfect even as your Father is perfect.* Not in degree, that were a discouraging command, but in kind. *Bruce.* As God is perfect in His relations to us, so must we be perfect in corresponding relations to Him. *Macdonald.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

In the *Temple Bible,* the spirit of the Old Dispensation and of the New is thus contrasted:

Perjury { Thou shalt not forswear thyself.
My *yes* and *no* ought to be as good as my oath, my word as my bond.

Retaliation { An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.
I ought to be of a forgiving spirit. A kiss for a blow.

Hatred of enemies { Thou shalt hate thy enemy.
I ought to love my enemy, and meanwhile my deeds toward him should be as those of a friend.

33. *Thou shalt not forswear thyself.* What, we ask, is the nature of an oath? It is for a man to put himself solemnly in God's presence, and assert that, as surely as God is God, and as he hopes for His blessing on his life, what he is saying is the truth. The essence of the oath is the solemnly putting oneself on special occasions in the presence of God. But is not God everywhere present? Are we ever out of His presence? Does not everything live simply with His life and depend on His will? Is there any meaning in selecting set occasions to put ourselves in God's presence, when God is always present and all that exists, exists in Him? It is to this truth of the omnipresence and omnipotence of our God that our Lord calls men's attention; and He deals with the Jewish commandment by lifting all conversation, all use of language, in His new kingdom, to the level which had previously been held by declarations on oath. To the Jew it had been a great thing to forswear himself, but little or nothing to speak in ordinary talk what was not true. Our Lord says: God is everywhere and all words are uttered in His presence, therefore truth is of universal obligation; your *yea* is always to be *yea,* and your *nay, nay. Charles Gore.*

39. *Turn to him the other also.* Rules are good, but principles are better. Rules may contradict, confuse; principles are constant, consistent. To live by rule is too often to miss the nobler mastery, the mental and moral development of principle. To live by principle is to be led to the best rules. When Jesus spoke of going two miles with the one who asked for one mile, of giving the extra cloak, of turning the other cheek, He was not laying down rules, but lifting up principles. *Maltbie D. Babcock.*

41. *Go with him twain.* Christ's counsel is: Do not submit to the inevitable in a slavish, sullen spirit, harboring thoughts of revolt. The three cases of non-resistance point out the higher way of victory. He that magnanimously bears, overcomes. *A. B. Bruce.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

33. *Thou shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths.* The Pharisees distinguished between serious oaths and lesser oaths. Philo forbade men to swear by the Supreme Cause, but told them they might, if need be, call to witness the earth, the sun, or the heavens. Maimonides said that swearing by Heaven or earth was not an oath.

40. *Let him have thy cloke also.* In Palestine, the universal and indispensable garments were two: first, the *chetoneth,* the inner vest or shirt, rather unfortunately rendered in our version *coat.* This was a long, loose garment, generally without sleeves, and reaching to the knees or ankles. It was retained at night. Over this during the day was worn the *me'il,* rendered *cloke* in our version, answering to our coat, which had loose sleeves, and was larger than the shirt. This was usually, especially when traveling, fastened round the waist by a girdle, the folds of which were used as pockets for carrying small articles. The *me'il* was always used at night as a blanket, thrown over the sleeper; hence the command in the law of Moses that the (outer) garment taken in pledge was to be restored to the owner in the evening, for he did not require it while working in the day, but needed it as a covering at night. *Tristram.*

The Coat and Cloak

41. *Shall compel thee to go,* ἀγγαρεύσει. This word throws the whole injunction into a picture which is entirely lost to the English reader. A man is traveling, and about to pass a post-station, where horses and messengers are kept in order to forward royal missives as quickly as possible. An official rushes out, seizes him, and forces him to go back and carry a letter to the next station, perhaps to the great detriment of his business. The word is of Persian origin, and denotes the impressment into service which officials were empowered to make of any available persons or beasts, on the great lines of road where the royal mails were carried by relays of riders. *Vincent, Word Studies.*

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. One day a little girl had to be a witness in court. Because she was so young, one of the lawyers asked her if she knew

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what an oath in court meant. "Yes, sir," said the girl. "What is it?" "It is a swear." "What do you mean by saying that it is a swear?" "Well, it is that I have to tell the truth." "If you don't tell the truth, what then?" "That would be a sin." "What is a sin?" "A bad mark from God." They were satisfied that she knew what it meant to speak the truth, and they believed all that she said in her testimony.

When Jesus was taken before Caiaphas, the High Priest, after Judas had betrayed Him, the High Priest said to Him, "I adjure thee by the living God, that Thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God." Jesus saith unto him, "Thou hast said." This was in the nature of an oath at court; Jesus did not object to this, for He knew that because all men do not speak the truth, it is necessary in court to have them put themselves solemnly in the presence of God and assert that they will speak only the truth.

For Older Pupils. It is throughout the method of St. Matthew to collect or group similar incidents or sayings. Thus he gives us a group of miracles (chapters 8–9), a group of parables (chapter 13), a long denunciation of the Pharisees which is represented in two different passages of St. Luke's Gospel (chapter 23), and a group of discourses about "the end" of which the same thing may be said (chapter 24). Judging from his general method, then, we should conclude that in the Sermon on the Mount, we have grouped together sayings which probably were uttered, in fact, as St. Luke represents, on different occasions. For it is St. Luke's intention throughout to present events "in order" and the sayings of Christ each in its proper context.

But it must not be forgotten that a teacher who, like our Lord, teaches by way of "sentences" or proverbs, is sure to repeat the same truth in different forms and from different points of view. Those who have examined Francis Bacon's note-books and published works, tell us how those weighty sentences of his were written down again and again, and reappear continually in slightly different shapes. So we may suppose it probable that our Lord frequently repeated similar utterances. *Charles Gore.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. Our Word Should be as Good as Our Bond

A True Man's Word Is his Bond. A true man loves truth for its own sake. To require more than a word from such a man would be an insult to his honor. Oaths have their origin in man's propensity to deceive. They are encouraged by vanity. They tend to a contempt for sacred things. A common swearer is an habitual perjurer. He that swears will lie. He that lies will steal. *J. A. Macdonald.*

Lies Classified. 1. Lies of carelessness. 2. Lies of cowardice.

3. Lies of politeness. 4. Lies of flattery. 5. Lies of self-glorification. 6. Lies of malevolent hostility. 7. Lies of self-defense. 8. Lies of benevolence. 9. Lies of convention. 10. Lies of modesty, when you say you can not do what you can do, to avoid the appearance of forwardness. *John Stuart Blackie.*

White and Black Lies. A boy is forbidden to go to a companion's house. He goes. On his way home he sees mother and father sitting at the front door. He quickly runs down a side street and approaches his home from the opposite direction. The essence of the lie is in his motive to deceive.

A girl goes to a neighboring drug store to secure some medicine for a friend, who tells her that the medicine will be seventy-five cents, and hands her a dollar bill. When she pays for it the druggist tells her that it is only fifty cents, and gives her the change. Returning, she places the bottle and twenty-five cents in the hand of her friend, and being warmly thanked, departs without uttering a single word.

In these cases without a motion of the lips a lie is told.

I looked into a nest in the spring and saw four little birds just hatched. They looked almost perfectly white. Two weeks later I looked again. They started from the nest as I moved the branch, and behold they were quite black. White lies need but a little age on them to turn them black.

While fishing with a friend we caught some small trout in the shallow water. He immediately remarked, "That shows that they are here; we will get larger ones when we come to the deeper water." So, if the young child entertains little lies, as his thoughts and plans become deeper he will abound in larger ones.

Carlyle says: "A lie should be trampled on and extinguished wherever found. I am for fumigating the atmosphere when I suspect that falsehood, like pestilence, breathes around me." *Forrest E. Dager, in International Evangel.*

Spheres and Cubes. When we are as yet small children there comes up to us a youthful angel, holding in his right hand cubes like dice, and in his left spheres like marbles. The cubes are of stainless ivory, and on each is written in letters of gold, *Truth.* The spheres are veined, and streaked, and spotted beneath, with a dark crimson flush above, where the light falls on them, and in a certain aspect you can make out upon every one of them the three letters, *Lie.* The child to whom they are offered very probably clutches at both. The spheres are the most convenient things in the world; they roll with the least possible impulse just where the child would have them. The cubes will not roll at all; they have a great talent for standing still, and always keep right side up. But very soon the young philosopher finds out that things which roll so easily are very apt to roll into the wrong corner, and to get out of his way when he most wants them, while he always knows where to find the others,

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which stay where they are left. Thus he learns—thus we learn—to drop the streaked and speckled globes of falsehood, and to hold fast the white angular blocks of truth. *Oliver Wendell Holmes.*

II. Retaliation

The Ancient Law. Fines were instituted to take the place of the ancient and terrible law of retaliation, which still exists among the Arabs, but which could, even as early as the time of Moses, be remitted by the payment of a fine, except in a case of homicide. In the first century there was a tariff of these pecuniary compensations, ranging higher or lower according to the offense. "If a man has given his neighbor a box on the ear, let him give him a *maneh.* If he has struck him on the cheek, let him give him two hundred *zuz* (two hundred zuz represented a little over seven pounds). *Edmond Stapfer.*

The oldest newspaper in Japan, exhorting the people to regard the Russians kindly, and harbor no ungenerous feelings towards their enemy, says: "Revenge is a sin; it is a barbarous act! An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, belongs to an old law which is obsolete. We are living under a new law of universal brotherhood and love." *Arthur T. Pierson.*

Jesus Never Resented an Injury. There was not a moment in all our Lord's life when there was the slightest bitterness of feeling in His breast. No resentment ever found an instant's lodgment in the heart. His answer to all the unkindness, the enmity, the plottings, the denials, the treason, and to all the cruelty, accusation, and wrong inflicted upon Him, was—love. Thus it is that we should bear all that is unjust, unkind, and wrong in the treatment that we receive from others. We are to keep love in our hearts through it all.

One has often heard of that spring, as sweet as any that ever gushed from sunny hillside, which a traveler once found by the sea when the tide had ebbed away. Then the sea rolled in, and poured its bitter floods over the little spring, hiding it out of sight for hours, wrapping it in a shroud of brackish waters. But when the tide ebbed away again, the spring was still pouring up its sweet stream, with no taste of the sea's bitterness in it. Such a spring should the love in our hearts be. Though floods of unkindness and of wrong pour over us, however cruelly we may be treated by the world, whatever injustice we may have to endure from others, the well of love in our bosom should never retain a trace of the bitterness, but should be always sweet. *Sunday School Times.*

There is true Heroism in Bearing Insults and Injuries. A modern philosopher, J. S. Mill, has said that Christ, in giving such instructions, had done wonders for the ideal of humility and charity in the world, but had failed to inculcate manliness and courage which was so amply developed by the laws of mediæval chivalry. Mill thought, therefore, that the

Christian ideal was one-sided, and required to be supplemented by the warlike type, which resents insult, and challenges the aggressor to defend himself. Bravery is of all qualities that which most attracts the human race. But the one feature which stands out prominently in the society founded by Christ and His apostles is the extraordinary heroism which was shown in the face of death and tortures, not only by men, but by feeble women and children. It amazed the heathen magistrates who were striving after fortitude by the aid of philosophy. It amazed the wild savages, who mistook gentleness for cowardice, when they found that it was harder to terrify the missionary who came with the gospel than the invader who came in battle array. Quiet endurance may be more heroic than violent resistance, and the Christian law of bearing personal insults and injuries meekly tends to the development of the highest courage and of the truest manliness. There is nothing more courageous, more heroic in all history, than the living up to this principle. *Professor Mahaffy, in Sunday School Times.*

III. Treatment of Enemies

The Lesson Jesus Taught. Taking Jesus' saying in the context of the discourse, its meaning is: Show your enemies by your own behavior towards them how they ought to behave towards you. Instead of letting yourself be led astray into evil ways by them, try to win them over by your example to what is good and right. Such an attitude, even towards those who are unfriendly and hostile, is the only one that gives special worth to a man. Love for love, a good deed for a good deed, lending where one hopes to receive—this is the way of the sinful world, and confers no merit, but love towards your enemy, doing good and lending without hope of a corresponding service in return, gains the rich reward of the children of God, namely, the kingdom of Heaven. No man ought to allow himself to be deterred from doing his own duty by the ill conduct of another. The duty of love persists, whether he to whom it is paid proves himself grateful or not. We should not allow any other person by his conduct to disturb the well-settled order of our own life. *Holtzmann, Life of Jesus.*

It is hard for us not to meet hate with hate and scorn with scorn. It is hard for us to keep the narrow line that separates legitimate pain and sorrow at an enemy's enmity, from non-legitimate enmity and wrath. We are apt to give back to the world, and to men around us, the face with which they look upon us. But Jesus Christ has bidden us—and there is no wriggling out of the duty, hard as it may be—to meet enmity with love, and wrong with patient endurance, and to answer the spurt of the fires of hatred with the gush of the extinguishing water of love. That is our duty. We forget it; we formulate reasons against it. But for the individual and the nation, Christ's pattern has to be followed, and Christ's

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principles to be obeyed. We must remember not only that "force is no remedy," but that hatred is no remedy either. An enemy crushed is tenfold an enemy; an enemy won is a hundredfold a friend. There is the law for us. *Alexander Maclaren.*

We are All Brothers: All Cains and Abels. Doctor Farrar classes hatred among "murderous sins," and declares that it is so common a sin, he wonders who is wholly free from it. "There is an extraordinary variety of words," he says, "which express the evil passions that are the germ and substance of murderousness. Anger, rage, wrath, fury, vindictiveness, revenge, strife, contentiousness, rivalry, sullenness, malice, malignity, rancor, an unforgiving temper, spleen, unkindness, enmities, grudges, jealousies, faction, envy, spite, hatred, bitterness, misanthropy, detestation, execration, loathing—all these and other words which make up the black catalogues of uncharitableness, show the ugly variety of forms which are taken by this full-sized and many-headed monster. They are all forms of egotism turned sour. How often have we witnessed them, how often suffered from them! And when we find them, thick as autumnal leaves, rotting on the soil of universal history, and blossoming in putrescent heaps across our own lives, we are almost driven with a shudder to repeat that grim saying of the satirist, 'We are all brothers; all Cains and Abels.'"

SENTENCE SERMONS

All that a man gains by lying is that he is not trusted when he tells the truth.

The greatest homage we can pay to truth is to use it. *Emerson.*

Patience and silence in strife are the sign of a noble mind. *Oriental Proverb.*

What an age most needs is a Bible well worn in that part which contains the Sermon on the Mount. *David Swing.*

Govern the lips
As they were palace doors, the king within. *Arnold.*

Some persons had never had a particular place in my prayers, but for the injuries they have done me. *Burkitt.*

His words are bonds, his oaths are oracles;
His love sincere, his thoughts immaculate;
His tears pure messengers sent from his heart;
His heart as far from fraud as Heaven from earth. *Shakespeare.*

Cultivate forbearance, till your heart yields a fine crop of it. *Spurgeon.*

I will permit no enemy to degrade my soul to the level of hatred. *Booker Washington.*

To tell a falsehood is like the cut of a sabre; for though the wound may heal, the scar of it will remain. *Sadi.*

The first lesson in religion is, be true; the second lesson is, be true; and the third lesson is, be true. *Robertson.*

Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect: that summit is impossible if there is no divine Christ to lead and lift us thither. *Van Dyke.*

Not unwisely did the founders of Harvard College select "Veritas" as the sacred word which a young man should cherish throughout his training, if he would come to clean and influential manhood. *George Herbert Palmer.*

In the modern world, a nation is effective in proportion to its truthfulness, or in other words, in proportion as it keeps its thinking, speaking, and acting, in accordance with facts. *Charles W. Eliot.*

Love is the Holy Spirit within;
Hate, the unpardonable sin!
Who preaches otherwise than this,
Betrays the Master with a kiss. *Longfellow.*

Lies may be light and accidental, but they are an ugly soot from the smoke of the pit, and it is better that our hearts should be swept clean of them, without care as to which is largest or blackest. *Ruskin.*

The logic of Christian petitions and Christian expectations starts with God as the premise, and thence argues the possibility of the impossible. *Alexander Maclaren.*

Don't introduce me to that man; I want to go on hating him, and I can't hate a man if I know him. *Charles Lamb.*

The great ocean washes over the blackest and barrenest rock as lovingly as it kisses the smiling strand of fertile lands. *Alexander Maclaren.*

I am convinced that from beginning to end there runs one air through the countless variations of the Sermon on the Mount—an air that can be expressed in one word, self-forgetfulness. *George Mathewson.*

To be perfect as God is perfect is the sublime hope of human life: The dewdrop may carry in its bosom the perfect image of the star; light, whether gathered to a point on the surface of the dewdrop, or diffused through boundless firmaments, is the same. *William J. Dawson.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. John 8.32.

But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment; for by thy words thou shalt be justified and by thy words thou shalt be condemned. Matt. 12.36, 37.

Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. Psa. 34:13.

Six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: a proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, an heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, a false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren. Prov. 6.16-20.

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For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body. Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body. Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned over with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth. Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! . . . The tongue is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. James 3.2-5, 8-10.

Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously. 1 Peter 2.23.

Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. Rom. 12.19-21.

Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. Matt. 18.15.

Love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. Luke 6.35.

A soft answer turneth away wrath; but grievous words stir up anger. Prov. 15.1.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Do you think that Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount, has set for us an impossible standard? It is difficult to free our hearts from a revengeful spirit, it is still harder to love our enemies, it is hardest of all, wellnigh impossible, to love after the manner of God's love, to be perfect even as He is perfect. Abraham Lincoln has well interpreted the forty-eighth verse of our lesson. He says: "The Saviour, I suppose, did not expect that any human creature could be perfect as the Father in Heaven; but He said, 'As your Father in heaven is perfect, be ye also perfect.' He set this up as a standard, and he who did most toward reaching that standard attained the highest degree of moral perfection."

Some one has said that in a writing book a poor copy is never set before a child simply because he can not write like a perfect copy. His badly formed, crooked, straggling characters may not bear much resemblance to the copperplate inscription above, but by conscientious imitation he learns

to write better and better, and to approach more nearly to his perfect model.

"To obey a command we must at least set out upon the road it sets before us," says an editorial in the *Sunday School Times*. "If God were to order any one to walk all the way to the Pacific coast, it would be obedience for him to make the attempt. He would be obeying as truly in going the first mile, as when he was getting to the end of the journey. So the command to go on to perfection is obeyed in every honest struggle with our own imperfections, in every earnest effort after a higher life. Disobedience to the command is not in our being imperfect, but in our resting in our imperfection and being content with it."

THE LESSON SUMMARY

The old law was, thou shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths, said Jesus, but I say unto thee, Swear not at all, for all oaths, whether they make use of God's name or not, imply an appeal to Him. See to it that thou art so truthful at all times that thy yea and nay will always be sufficient.

The old law was an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, but I say unto you That ye resist not evil. Rise above an injury, show a forgiving spirit. Turn the other cheek to the one who smites thee on one cheek, give thy cloak to the one who takes thy coat; go two miles with the one who compels thee to go one, give and lend to every one that asketh—these specific examples are parables for thee, illustrating the great principle of the beatitudes, Blessed are the meek.

The old law was, Love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy, but I say unto thee, Love thine enemy, do good to them that hate thee, thus only shalt thou prove thy sonship to God. God maketh His sun to shine and His rain to fall on the just and on the unjust: be ye perfect in love after the manner that He is perfect.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The teaching of the Old Testament and that of the New.
2. Is it possible always to treat one's enemies as if they were friends?
3. The public standards of morality and life have varied from age to age: the privilege of Christians is to look above these standards to a standard of absolute righteousness.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Ask your pupils to review those topics that you have decided to take up in the class next week.

REVIEW

Time: B. C. 5–A. D. 28.

Golden Text for the Quarter

And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness. Matt. 4.23.

JESUS THE TEACHER

The first six paragraphs below are from *Discipleship,* by G. Campbell Morgan.

The Ideal Disciple. Μαθητης, *disciple,* signifies a taught or trained one, and gives us the ideal of relationship. Jesus is the Teacher,—Himself possessing full knowledge,—bending over a pupil, and for a set purpose, with an end in view, imparting knowledge step by step, point by point, ever working on toward a definite end. That conception includes also the true ideal of our position. We are not casual listeners, neither are we merely interested hearers desiring information, we are disciples, looking toward and desiring the same end as the Master, and therefore listening to every word and applying all our energy to realizing the Teacher's purpose for us. Such is the ideal.

The School. No school of man was ever so strictly guarded, so select, as this, yet none was ever so easy of access. No bar of race, or color, or caste, or age, stands across the entrance . . . And yet Jesus stands at the entrance, forbidding any to enter, save upon certain conditions. "Whosoever does not bear his own cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple." (Luke 14.27.) "Whosoever he be of you that renounceth not all he hath, he cannot be my disciple." (Luke 14.33.) The Teacher demands that we shall take up the cross and so follow on, even though the progress be through pain.

Duration of Membership. Right relationship with the Teacher must be maintained. The idea is common that at some set time, through some special season of blessing, one enters into right relationship with Him, and that, therefore, through all the coming days these relationships abide. It is absolutely false. There is nothing in all the realms of life more delicate, more easy to interfere with than these relationships. Daily personal communion there must be, and the means of such, study of His

word, waiting upon Him in prayer, the cultivation of close fellowship, by telling Him everything—joys as well as sorrows—and the periods of silence in which the soul simply waits and listens in the stillness for His voice, these can not be neglected without a film, a veil, a cloud, coming between the soul and Himself, and so hindering the possibility of advancement.

Examinations. Jesus knows the capacity and weakness and strength of every one in His school, and His examinations do not consist in a common testing for a common standard, and so are not competitive. They are rather individual, special care being taken with each one, and Peter will learn the supreme lesson of love with John, but the opportunity for manifesting it as a force in life will be separate and special in each case.

A School of Practice. The school of Jesus is a technical school. He provides opportunities for us to prove in practical life the truths He has to declare. . . . No lesson is considered learned in the school of Jesus which is only committed to memory. That lesson only is learned which is incarnate in the life.

The Lessons are Progressive. The teaching of Jesus is cumulative and progressive. To attempt to learn the lessons of to-morrow without knowing to-day's would be the utmost folly. Somewhere back in the past you will find a day when the Teacher gave you some new vision of truth that straightway revealed an opportunity for you to know the glory of that truth in the pathway of obedience. Something to be given up. Something to be done. Some word to be said. You paused, argued, disobeyed. No other lesson has been given, nor can be. Every other depended on that. That was not final. It was preparatory, and until that is learned by obedience there can be no advancement, and so for weeks, perchance months, aye, even years, you have been a disciple making no progress.

The Theme. The Synoptists begin their narratives of the public ministry of Jesus with the statement that He came into Galilee preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom (Mark 1.14, 15), and at the close of His ministry, when He was before Pilate, He admitted that He was a King and spoke of His Kingdom (John 18.36, 37). So the kingdom of Heaven and the King of that kingdom are the twofold theme of His teaching. The first part of His theme was more prominent at the beginning, the second part more prominent at the close, of His ministry. His teaching on the first was to all kinds of hearers; His teaching on the latter was confined more especially to His own disciples. *Gilbert, Student's Life of Jesus.*

Popular Character of the Teaching. The form of Christ's teaching was eminently popular. His address had this quality because, in the first place, it was concrete, never abstract. He does not speak of the *summum bonum*, but of the pearl of great price. He does not speak of Providence, but says that the hairs of our head are all numbered. Instead of speaking of divine beneficence, He says that God sends rain on the just and the unjust.

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Again, Christ's words are largely proverbial in character, and hence easily remembered. He gave a series of short, pointed sayings, each of which has a certain completeness in itself.

In the third place, Christ's words were largely symbolic. This is especially the case with those which are found in the fourth gospel, though true also of the Synoptists. The symbols used by Jesus were drawn from common life and from the outer world. Take, for example, the seventh chapter of Matthew. It contains these symbols: the mote in the eye, the dog, the swine, knocking at the door, the narrow gate, wolf in sheep's clothing, good tree, good fruit, house on the rock, house on the sand. *Gilbert, Student's Life of Jesus.*

Simplicity of Language. How exquisitely and freshly simple is the actual language of Christ compared with all other teaching that has ever gained the ear of the world! There is no science in it, no art, no pomp of demonstration, no carefulness of toil, no trick of rhetoricians, no wisdom of the schools. Straight as an arrow to the mark, His precepts pierce to the very depths of the soul and spirit. *Farrar, Life of Christ.*

Depth of Thought. The teaching of Jesus is, to borrow the image of the wisest of the Latin Fathers, a great sea whose smiling surface breaks into refreshing ripples at the feet of our little ones, but into whose unfathomable depths the wisest men gaze with the shudder of amazement and the thrill of love. *Farrar, Life of Christ.*

Untaught in any academy or university like those of Athens, He floods the world with a knowledge as much more profound than the philosophy of Socrates or Plato, as the Atlantic is deeper than the wayside pool. *Theodore L. Cuyler.*

The Patience of the Teacher. We may learn His patience as a teacher. He is not in restless commotion to have His work done on the instant, nor does He abandon it in discontent when men prove inapt and slow. He has often to say in sorrow more than in anger, "How is it that ye do not understand?" But He patiently begins His work again, and is long-suffering to our ignorance, as to our sins. Short-lived men must speak out all their mind before they die, but the centuries belong to Christ, and He can calmly wait. He knows He has time to teach what He intends; He knows also the final and triumphant issue, and without haste, and without rest, He is advancing to it. *John Ker.*

Effectiveness of His teaching. Thoughtful people of every creed have accepted without cavil at least one historic title of Christ—The Great Teacher. Men of His own generation could not but admit the power of His teaching. The common people heard Him gladly. The emissaries of the chief priests confessed that never man spake like this man. Nicodemus voiced the conviction of the entire Sanhedrim when he said, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God." When Christ so willed, all saw His meaning with convicting clearness; again He spoke, so that hearing they might hear and not understand; but in either case

men wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of His mouth, felt their hearts burn within them, pressed to hear Him so that Gennesaret beach was overcrowded and a fisherman's boat became the pulpit of the world. *Henry Turner Bailey.*

Duration of the School. Jesus had only three years to accomplish His life-work. If we remember how quickly three years in an ordinary life pass away, and how little at their close there is to show for them, we shall see what must have been the size and quality of that character, and what the unity and intensity of design of that life, which in so marvelously short a time made such a deep and ineffaceable impression on the world, and left to mankind such a heritage of truth and influence. *Stalker, Life of Christ.*

JESUS THE PHYSICIAN

The Need of a Physician. It was as the Healer rather than as the Reformer that the fame of Jesus was first spread abroad.

Imagine, if you can, the condition of a country in which there is neither trained physician nor skilled surgeon, where the healing art is only practised by a few quacks, who rely more on charms than on physic for their cures. Such is now, and such was Palestine in our Lord's day. There were physicians (St. Luke, we know, was one), but their whole education was, as we learn from the Talmud, empirical. Doubtless there were then, as now, many kindly nurses, with a knowledge of herbs, embrocations, and simples, but whose knowledge went no further. Imagine a town of twenty thousand inhabitants, like Gaza, with one-third of its population suffering from blindness, partial or total, and not a physician of any kind in the city! Think of the thickly studded villages and not a man with skill enough to set a fractured limb, or treat a fever or an inflammation! Yet in the Holy Land, until medical missionaries were sent out by the English Societies, there was not a physician in the country, and even now there are very few.

In such a country as this, with sick and crippled in every village, we can picture the eager excitement when the news spread that there has arrived a good physician; that He has healed by the touch a cripple who has lain for twenty years helpless on his mat; that by a word a leper's flesh has become as pure as that of a little child; that He has stretched out His hand and lifted a poor worn patient from her bed; that He has given sight to the blind beggar; that He has done all this and more, simply when asked! Who has not an ailing friend or kinsman! The whole village turns out. So they came to Him from every quarter, and brought to Him all that were diseased, and they that were possessed with devils. *Tristram, Eastern Customs.*

The Number of Cures. Besides the seventeen specific cases of healing mentioned in the Gospels, there are at least three general statements,

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which involve the cure of many sick persons at different times (Mark 1.34; 3.10; 6.56. Compare with Matt. 8.16; Luke 4.40; 6.19). Matthew twice speaks of "all manner of disease" as cured by Jesus (Matt. 4.23; 9.35). Jesus healed, as He also cast out demons and raised the dead, by the Spirit of God, or by the finger of God (Matt. 12.28; Luke 11.20; Mark 7.33, 34; John 11.41, 42). It was by an act of His will, in dependence upon God. *Gilbert, Student's Life of Jesus.*

Jesus Went About Doing Good. What did this supreme Man do with His life? He went about doing good. He spent it in the service of the criminal, the vicious, the outcast, the vast weltering masses of abandoned humanity. He took His life, with its superlative wisdom and goodness from His baptism to His crucifixion, and gave it in one continuous sacrifice in attestation of His sense of the worth of the human soul. The life of Jesus was equally His offering to the Infinite and His tribute to the dignity of Man. *S. A. Gordon.*

We can not separate the wonderful teaching from the wonderful Life. *The Temple Bible.*

A BRIEF REVIEW OF THE LESSONS

Lesson 1. Joseph and Mary journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem to be enrolled there in accordance with a decree of Cæsar. Because of the crowd they fail to obtain shelter in the inn, and they take up their abode in a cave used for a stable. There Jesus is born. Angels announce the birth to shepherds in the field at night, and a heavenly chorus sings of the good tidings. The shepherds come at once to Bethlehem and find the Child Jesus in the manger-cradle.

Lesson 2. Wise men in the far East see a strange star in the heavens, that proclaims to them the birth of Jesus. They come to Jerusalem to inquire where they will find the King of the Jews. Herod learns from the scribes that it was prophesied that Jesus would be born in Bethlehem. Herod sends the wise men on to Bethlehem, but directs them, after they find the Infant Christ, to return to Jerusalem and tell him. Guided by the star, the Wise Men find Jesus, worship Him, and present to Him gifts. Warned by God in a dream, they return home without seeing Herod.

Lesson 3. A glimpse of the perfect boyhood of Jesus, passing through the experience of growing in stature, in wisdom, and in grace. The vision of His true relationship to His Heavenly Father dawns on Him as He makes His first visit to Jerusalem at the time of the Passover, and talks with the doctors in the Temple. His parents have missed Him on the return journey, and they retrace their steps to Jerusalem to find Him. Jesus obediently goes back with them to Nazareth, and remains subject to them.

Lesson 4. The forerunner of Christ, John the Baptist, in his strange garb, brings to the people his stern message of repentance and baptism

for remission of sin. To him comes Jesus, and is baptized in the Jordan that He may wholly identify Himself with humanity, and may consecrate Himself to His divine mission. A dove-like Spirit and an audible Voice proclaim Him God's "Beloved Son."

Lesson 5. Jesus in the wilderness passes through Satan's severest temptations and triumphantly vanquishes His enemy. He will not use His divine power for His own hunger; He will not test God's care in Whom He has implicit confidence; He will not seek His kingdom by any other way than the one which God has appointed Him. He uses the sword of the word of God to overcome His foe.

Lesson 6. The crowds that wish to hear Jesus are so great that He enters a boat on the Sea of Galilee and speaks from there to the people on the shore. The owners of the boat are mending their nets after a night of vain toil. Jesus directs them to launch out into the deep, and, though they think it useless, they obey. A wonderful draught of fish is taken. Peter, awed by the miracle and by his insight of the amazing goodness of Jesus, realizes his own failings and falls at Jesus' feet, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man." Jesus tells him that He will make him and his partners fishers of men.

Lesson 7. A busy day in Capernaum, Jesus, while preaching in the synagogue, is interrupted by the cries of a demoniac. He compels the evil spirits to leave the man, greatly to the astonishment of the people. Jesus then visits the home of Peter, finds Peter's wife's mother very ill with fever, restores her to health, and she at once arises and ministers to them. At sunset, Jesus heals a great many who are brought to Him.

Lesson 8. Jesus is in a room speaking to a great crowd, when four men seek to bring a sick friend to Him for healing. They carry the paralytic on a mattress and when they find they can not even enter the room where Jesus is, they mount the outside stairway with him, tear up the roof, and let him down before Jesus. Jesus tells the sick man that He forgives his sins. The scribes are thinking that only God can forgive sins, and Jesus, reading their thoughts, asks them which is easier (to do), to forgive sins or to cure sickness. Then He tells the paralytic to rise, take up his bed, and go to his home. This the man does, and the amazement of the crowd leads them to glorify God.

Lesson 9. Jesus is seated upon a mountain, speaking to His disciples and to the multitude. He tells them that the poor in spirit, those that mourn, the meek, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, and those persecuted for righteousness' sake, are blessed. He further tells the disciples that they are like salt, preventing corruption and arousing the sense of health, but he reminds them that salt is good for nothing if it has lost its savor. They are like light also, and their light must not be hid, but must so shine that men may see their good works and glorify their Father.

Lesson 10. Jesus is still upon the mountain speaking to the dis-

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ciples: He warns them that they must be yea and nay men, their word so true that there will be no need of their taking oaths; that they must not seek revenge, but must be willing to bear injuries; that they must treat with kindness those who injure them; must even love their enemies.

REVIEW OF THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

MATT. 5; 6; 7

I. The Beatitudes, 5.1-12.
II. The Metaphors applicable to those possessing the qualities named in the Beatitudes, 13-16.
III. The new law a continuation of the old, 17-19.
IV. The new law supersedes the old, 20-48.
  1. The new righteousness, 20.
  2. Murder, 21-26.
  3. Adultery, 27-32.
  4. Taking an oath, 33-37.
  5. Retaliation, 38-42.
  6. Treatment of enemies, 43-48.
V. God is the motive of the new righteousness, 6.1-18.
  1. Almsgiving, 1-4.
  2. Prayer, 5–15. [Our Lord's Prayer, 9–15.]
  3. Fasting, 16-18.
VI. Christian Characteristics, 19-34; 7.1-12.
  1. Unworldliness, 19-34.
  2. Judgment of others and of self, 7.1-5.
  3. Communicating religious privileges, 6.
  4. Impartial benevolence, 6-12.
VII. Final Warnings, 13-27.
  1. Two Ways, 13, 14.
  2. False prophets; known by fruits, 15-21.
  3. Hearers and Doers, 21-27.
  4. The Parable of the wise and foolish builders, 24–27.
VIII. Astonishment at Christ's teaching, 28, 29.

REVIEW OUTLINES

Title	Persons	Outline
1. Shepherds find Jesus.	Cæsar Augustus, shepherds, Joseph, Mary, Infant Jesus.	Journey to Bethlehem. Jesus' birth. Joyful tidings.

Title	Persons	Outline
2. Wise men find Jesus.	Wise men, Herod, Chief priests and scribes.	Conference with priest. Conference with wise men. Christ worshiped.
3. The Boy Jesus.	Jesus, Joseph, Mary, Doctors.	Passover. Parents fearful. Pupil in the temple. Perfect youth.
4. The baptism of Jesus.	John the Baptist, Multitudes, Jesus, the Spirit.	Preparation. Preaching of John. Passive Christ. Praise from on high.
5. Temptation of Jesus.	Jesus, Satan, Angels.	Tempter and tempted. Tested by hunger. Tempted to tempt God. Tested by ambition. Tempter foiled.
6. Jesus Calling Fishermen.	Fishermen, Multitude, Four Disciples.	Fishermen mending nets. Following Jesus' order. Fish caught. Frightened Peter. Fishers of men.
7. Day of Miracles.	Jesus, Multitude, Demoniac, Peter's wife's mother.	Doctrine of Jesus. Demon destroyed. Deserved fame. Disease dispelled.
8. Jesus' Power to Forgive.	Jesus, Multitude, Paralytic and friends, Scribes.	Swarm of people. Sick of the palsy. Sin forgiven. Scribes criticize. Sickness cured. Surprise of multitude.
9. Jesus Tells who are Blessed.	Jesus, Disciples, Multitude.	Beatitudes. Beneficent or bad salt. Beacon lights.
10. The Tongue and the Temper.	Jesus, Disciples, Multitude.	Untruths. Unrighteous vengeance. Unchristian hatred.

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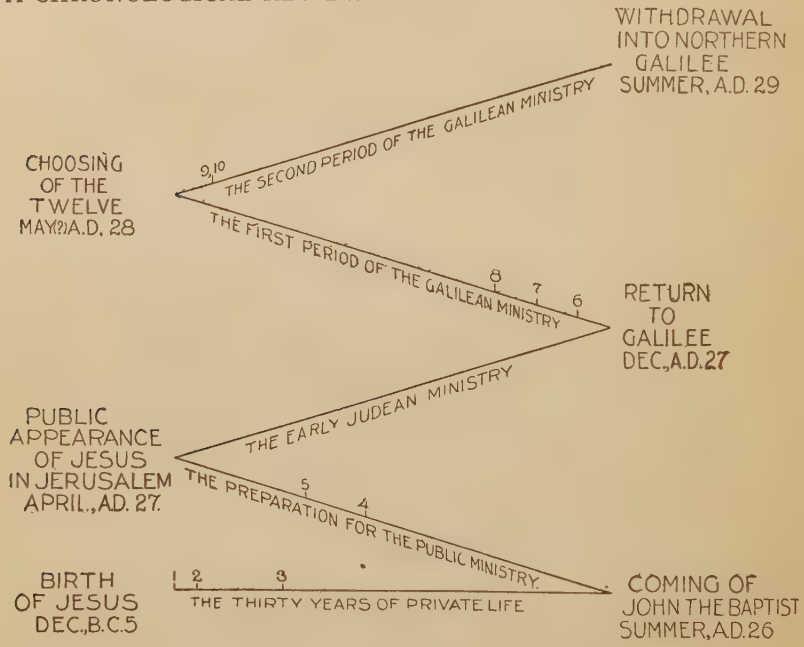
A REVIEW OF THE GEOGRAPHY OF PALESTINE IN THE TIME OF CHRIST

See paragraphs 1-7, 9-15, 17-24, 34, 39, 59, 82, 90, 107-109 and 114.

A CHRONOLOGICAL REVIEW


WITHDRAWAL INTO NORTHERN GALILEE SUMMER, A.D. 29
CHOOSING OF THE TWELVE MAY?, A.D. 28
9, 10
THE SECOND PERIOD OF THE GALILEAN MINISTRY
THE FIRST PERIOD OF THE GALILEAN MINISTRY
8
7
6
RETURN TO GALILEE DEC., A.D. 27
PUBLIC APPEARANCE OF JESUS IN JERUSALEM APRIL, A.D. 27.
THE EARLY JUDEAN MINISTRY
5
4
THE PREPARATION FOR THE PUBLIC MINISTRY.
BIRTH OF JESUS DEC., B.C. 5
1
2
3
THE THIRTY YEARS OF PRIVATE LIFE
COMING OF JOHN THE BAPTIST SUMMER, A.D. 26

What four divisions of Christ's life have been studied this quarter? Give the limits of each division. Give the dates of each. Give the chief events in chronological order under each division. What events are recorded between the visits of the shepherds and the visit of Jesus to the Temple at the age of twelve? When and where was the first miracle wrought? What were the chief events of The Early Judean ministry? Before what event did the rejection at Nazareth take place? When were the Twelve chosen? Who were the Twelve?

If preferred, a connected review of the life of Christ covered by the lessons of this quarter may be had by reading one of the Lives of Christ—Stalker's, Andrew's, Farrar's, Geikie's, Edersheim's. By reading rapidly, or by judicious omissions planned beforehand, the entire section can be read, and pupils of any age will be greatly interested.

A REVIEW OF LIFE AND CUSTOMS IN PALESTINE

	PAGE		PAGE
The chief events in a boy's life.	28	Stables	5
The children in the home	29	Traveling	12, 28, 113
Children's study	54	Making roads	41
The house	88	The life of shepherds	5
The interior of a house	29	The life of scribes	77
Household furnishings	90, 101	Wilderness life	41
Books	54	Fishing boats and fishing	64
Guests in a home	88	Physicians and diseases	78, 90
Dress of the very poor	41	Temple instruction	28
Dress of most Jews	29, 41, 113	Synagogue worship	77
Food	29, 41, 54	Belief in astrology	18
Feasts	28	Civil life	101, 113
A khan	5		

A "SPELLING-DOWN" REVIEW

A writer in the *Sunday School Times* gives a plan for the conduct of a review that would be interesting to some classes. Let two leaders be chosen to act as captains of sides, and let the review be conducted as in a spelling contest. The captains choose by turn till all the scholars in the class are ranged on one side or the other. The teacher should have ready a list of questions, and should put the questions alternately to each side. The pupil who fails to answer should leave the ranks.

A REVIEW FOR THE ENTIRE SCHOOL

The following review for the entire school has been tried successfully: Twelve persons come prepared to conduct it. As the chalk artist of the school turns over the pictures he has prepared for each lesson, or some one turns the colored lesson picture roll, the one appointed in advance for each lesson talks four minutes on that lesson. Great variety may be obtained in this way. One will give a telling illustration, another will draw out the lesson by apt questioning, a third may recite a poem that enforces the thought of the lesson, a fourth may give a graphic word picture, a fifth may sing a song. A bell-tap should give notice when the four minutes are ended. As the pictures are exposed, the subjects and Golden Texts should be repeated by the school in concert.

TEMPERANCE LESSON

Prov. 23.29-35. (Read Gen. 9.18-27.) Commit v. 31.

Golden Text

At the last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder. Prov. 23.32.

29 Who cries "woe"? who "alas"? who has stripes? who complaints?
Who has wounds without cause? who redness of eyes?
30 They who linger long over wine,
Who often taste mixed wine.
31 Look not on the wine when it is red,
When it sparkles in the cup.
32 At the end it bites like a snake,
It pierces like an adder.
33 Thou wilt see strange things,
Queer things thou wilt say.
34 Thou wilt be like one who is sleeping at sea,
Like one asleep in a violent storm.
35 "I have been struck, but I feel no pain,
I have been beaten, I am not conscious of it."
36 When shall I awake from my wine?
I will seek it yet again.

International Critical Commentary.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

29. A series of questions, answered in verse 30. The authorized version reads: *Who hath woe, who hath sorrow?* The revised version, *Who hath oh? who hath alas?* The original words which are thus variously rendered are interjections, not nouns. *Complaints:* authorized version, *babbling.* "The brawling and strife to which drunkenness leads." *Deane. Wounds without cause.* Wounds which might have been avoided, the result of quarrels in which a sober man would never have engaged. *Deane.*

30. *Taste.* Literally, *go to try*—investigate, test, taste; the man is a devotee, he drinks continually. *Toy.* There is a touch of sarcasm in *go to seek.* The word elsewhere used of diligent search after knowledge is here used, as if ironically, of the investigations of connoisseurs in wine, meeting to test its qualities. *Plumptre. Mixed wine.* Perhaps mixed with spices.

31. *When it is red.* The usual color of the wine of Palestine. *When it moveth itself aright.* Having warned against the attraction of sight, the moralist now passes to the seduction of taste. This phrase probably alludes to the drinker's throat, and is best translated, *when it glideth down smoothly.* Regarding the danger of looking on seductive objects, the Arab, in his sententious language, says "The contemplation of vice is vice." *Deane.* Mr. Toy, in the translation above, has omitted this phrase, considering the Hebrew words a later addition. *When it sparkles.* Literally, *gives its gleam* (the term rendered *gleam* is the ordinary word for *eye*), that is, full of life. *Toy.*

32. *At the last.* Wine is like the subtle poison of a serpent, which affects the whole body, and produces the most fatal consequences. *Deane.*

33. *Queer things wilt thou say.* A description of the erratic fancies and fantastic talk of the drunken man—perhaps referring to delirium tremens. *Toy. Strange women.* The frequent occurrence of the word in this book as applied to harlots, justifies the English version. *Plumptre.*

34. The text of the second line appears to be corrupt. Literally it reads: *and as one sleeping* (or lying) *on the head—;* the word left untranslated (revised version, *mast*) occurs only here in the Old Testament, and its meaning, if it be a real word, is unknown; it is similar to the term for *line, rope,* but can hardly mean *mast* (which is a mere guess). It is simpler to adopt the expression "in a violent storm" (see John 1.4), which requires no great change in the Hebrew. *Toy.*

35. A soliloquy of the drunkard. *I feel no pain.* He has some vague idea that he has suffered certain rough treatment, but it has made no impression on him. *Deane. When shall I awake?* Better, omitting the interrogation, *when I shall awake, I will seek it yet again. Plumptre.* The time seems long before the drunkard fully awakes from the slumber after his debauch, in order to return to the orgies of yesternight. *Wordsworth.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

29. *Who hath redness of eyes?* A colonel of the army came to Lincoln to complain that he had been unjustly dismissed from the army for drunkenness while on duty. Lincoln knew that the officer had a noble record, but after listening patiently to his story, he arose and, grasping the soldier's right hand in both his own hands, exclaimed with a broken voice, "Colonel, I know your story. But you carry your own condemnation in your face."

32. *At the end it bites like a snake, it pierces like an adder.* There is an old legend of an enchanted cup filled with poison and put treacherously into a King's hand. He signed the sign of the cross and named the name of God over it, and it shivered in his grasp. Do you take this name of the Lord as a test? Name Him over many a cup which you are

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eager to drink of, and the glittering fragments will lie at your feet, and the poison be spilled on the ground. What you can not lift before His pure eyes and think of Him while you enjoy, is not for you. *Alexander Maclaren.*

33. *Thou wilt see strange things.* O thou invisible spirit of wine, if thou hast no name to be known by, let us call thee devil! . . . O God, that men should put an enemy in their mouths, to steal away their brains! That we should with joy, pleasure, revel and applause, transform ourselves into beasts. *Shakespeare.*

36. *I will seek it yet again.* "We feel," says John Stuart Mill, "that if we wished to prove that we have the power of resisting the motive, we could do so; and it would be humiliating to our pride, and paralyzing to our desire of excellence, if we thought otherwise. Yet the time may come when our actions will seem uncontrollable. The temptation has mastered us, not we the temptation."

General Scott was in command of a camp at Rock Island, Illinois. Cholera began its appearance in the camp, and the General issued an order that any soldier who should be found drunk, should be compelled, as soon as his strength would permit, to dig a grave in a suitable burying place, large enough for his own reception, "as such a grave can not fail to be soon wanted for the drunken man himself or some drunken companion." In a less literal sense, it may be said that every drunkard digs his own grave—the grave, at least, of his health, will-power, and ambition. *The Youth's Companion.*

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Amos R. Wells, in his *Three Years with the Children,* teaches this lesson of temperance. His subject is, "Tripped Up."

Jack Collins, with his *six* friends, stepped into the rum shop one evening. As they went out, late that night, walking very unsteadily, the saloon keeper put a big stone right in the way of one of Jack's comrades, and tripped him up. The comrade fell and was killed. That comrade was Jack's Health.

The next night Jack Collins, with *five* friends, went to the rum shop again, and again they all got drunk—so drunk that another friend was tripped up, as he went out, by the sly saloon keeper. That friend was Jack's Reputation.

The third night, in just the same way, another friend was lost, this time Jack's Wealth. The fourth night the stumbling-block tripped up Jack's Happiness, and the poor fellow from that time on had nobody to keep him cheerful. The next friend to go was Jack's Mind, so that Jack hardly had wit enough left to call for whisky when he came back on the sixth night. And that evening, as he and his sole remaining friend left the rum shop, that friend also was tripped up and slain. It was Jack's Soul.

The next night was the seventh, the holy Sabbath, and Jack lay alone in the gutter, his six friends all fallen over the rum shop's stumbling-blocks. And Jack himself was dead.

For Older Pupils. A New York merchant once asked Whitelaw Reid what was the best book for him to give his clerks as a business hand-book. Mr. Reid recommended "The Book of Proverbs."

The Book of Proverbs has been called "a manual of conduct." The purpose of the book is to teach such virtues as industry, honesty, kindness, forgiveness; to give warnings against vices; and to praise the worth of wisdom.

The opening words of the book are, "The proverbs of Solomon, the son of David, king of Israel," but the first verse of chapter 25 says, "These are also proverbs of Solomon which the men of Hezekiah, king of Judah copied out"; the first verse of chapter 30, "The words of Agur, the son of Jakeh"; and the first verse of chapter 31, "The words of king Lemuel, the prophecy that his mother taught him."

"The book is a compilation from different sources," says Doctor Plumptre, "as well as a selection from the sayings of one man, and in its present form was made some three centuries after the time of Solomon."

Our lesson to-day is from the twenty-third chapter of Proverbs, "a martial ode or song on the subject of temperance," "the fullest and liveliest description of drunkenness in the Old Testament."

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. Who Hath Woe? Who Hath Sorrow?

The Way of the Transgressor is Hard. Three letters embody the secret of a large part of the want and destitution in our land. Three letters suffice to tell what has filled our almshouses, our asylums, our prisons. And those three letters spell the word—RUM.

The people of the United States spend nine hundred million dollars every year for intoxicating liquors. These figures stand unchallenged. Nine hundred million dollars! Think what that means.

It means a yearly tax of nearly twenty dollars for every man, woman and child in this country, which sum must be paid out of the earnings of honest industry. It means a comfortable livelihood for at least one million of families swallowed up in this awful whirlpool. *Geo. H. Hubbard.*

Drunkenness is Degrading. A lawyer had fallen into open disgrace through convivial habits, and wanted to reform, but failed to succeed. At last a friend told him the plain truth. He said: "Now, James, the reason you do not reform is simply because you do not want to reform. You do not dislike the habit of drinking, and you are not ashamed of being drunk. You are afraid of exposure, and you do not like the con-

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sequences of your evil deeds. You will never reform until you see that drunkenness is in itself shameful and degrading, no matter whether other people know it or not. So long as you are merely trying to get away from the consequences of your indulgence, you will be tempted to drink every time you think you can do it without paying the penalty." Although the man was stunned by the frankness of his friend, he felt the force of the assault upon his conscience, and had left in him enough manhood to admit the charge and apply the remedy. *Christian Register.*

The Children's Lesson. Doctor Theodore L. Cuyler tells the story of a physician who was led to reform by the mimicking of his children. Young and talented, with a large practice, he was fond of a social glass now and then, but the appetite grew upon him until he became a common drunkard, without patients or money, on the verge of pauperism.

One evening he was recovering from a debauch, and was awakened from a stupid sleep on the lounge by the noise of his children. In his anger he was about to strike them, when he heard the older boy laugh and exclaim delightedly, "That's just like papa; let's both play drunk." Then he saw the two lads, the younger only six years old, stagger around the room and tumble down.

The agony of remorse was aroused in the father's heart at last. Had he become to his own innocent children such an infamous pattern? He went for a walk through the fields, and alone with God, he registered a vow that he would drink no more. He found strength to keep the vow, and became again the skilled and successful physician of upright character.

The Troubles of a South African King. Khama, the Christian king of the Bamangwatos, wrote to the British governor: "To fight against drink is to fight against demons, not against men. I dread the white man's drink more than all the assagais of the Matabeles which kill men's bodies, and it is quickly over; but drink puts devils into men and destroys both bodies and souls for ever. Its wound never heals. I pray your honor never to ask me to open even a little door to drink."

In spite of all his precautions, Khama afterwards discovered that English traders were selling intoxicating liquors to his subjects. He called them to him, and addressed them in these scathing words: "When you white men rule in this country you can do as you like. At present I rule, and I shall maintain my laws which you insult and despise. You have insulted and despised me in my own town because I am a black man. You do so because you despise black men in your hearts.

"If you despise us, what do you want here in the country that God has given to us? Go back to your own country. Take everything you have; strip the iron roofs off the houses; the wood of the country, and the clay of which you made the bricks, you can leave to be thrown down. Take all that is yours and go. I am trying to lead my people to act according to that Word of God which we have received from you white

people, and you show them an example of wickedness such as we have never known. You, the people of the Word of God! Go! Take your cattle, and leave my town, and never come back again."

The traders departed in disgrace, and since that time Khama's laws have been observed, and the white man's drink can not be found where he rules.

II. Look Not on the Wine When it is Red

Athletics and Temperance. The athlete must not break training rules. The pitcher who smokes a cigarette gives away the game. The punter who dances loses the goal, the sprinter who takes a convivial glass of beer breaks no record. His record breaks him. Some day we shall realize that the game of life is more strenuous than the game of football, more intricate than pitching curves, more difficult than punting. We shall keep in trim for it. We must remember training rules. The rules that win the football game are good also for success in business. Half the strength of young America is wasted in the dissipation of drinking or smoking. If we keep the training rules of life in literal honesty, we shall win a host of prizes that otherwise we would lose. Final success goes to the few, alas, who through life keep mind and soul and body clean. *David Starr Jordan.*

Queer Things shalt thou say. A young man of a fine family, of splendid gifts, was going down fast through strong drink. His friends had pleaded with him, but he had taken their warnings as an insult. One day one of them, who was a court stenographer, was sitting in a restaurant, when the young man came in with a companion, and took the table next to him, sitting down with his back to him without seeing him. He was just drunk enough to be talkative about his private affairs, and on the impulse of the moment, the stenographer pulled out his note-book, and took a short-hand report of every word he said. The next morning the stenographer copied it all out, and sent it around to the young man's office. In less than ten minutes the latter came tearing in with the exclamation, "What is this, anyhow?" "It's a stenographic report of your monologue at the restaurant last evening," his friend replied, and gave him a brief explanation. "Did I really talk like that?" he asked faintly. "I assure you it is an absolutely verbatim report," was the reply. He turned pale and walked out. He never drank another drop. *Herald and Presbyter.*

Two Abstainers. A young man who had joined the army was visiting at his mother's early home, and her friends were eager to see him. One dear old lady put her hands on his shoulders and scanned his face, and then exclaimed with satisfied voice, "Yes, you have your mother's eyes and your mother's lips." "I tell you, Mack," said the young soldier in telling about the incident afterwards, "I tell you I was glad that I had not lost my mother's eyes in the dissipation of army life."

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Diogenes, upon being presented at a feast with a goblet of wine, dashed it to the ground. His answer to the charge of wastefulness was: "Had I drunk it there would have been a double waste. I, as well as the wine, would have been lost."

III. I Will Seek it Yet Again

What I hate, that I do. In conducting prayers in the Inebriate Asylum at Binghamton, Doctor Lyman Abbott read without comment the seventh chapter of Romans: "What I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that do I." At the close of the service half a dozen men came to him and asked where that chapter was. "That describes our condition exactly," said they.

"There is nothing more hopeless than the ineffectual remorse of a man who drinks and wishes he didn't," says President Jordan. "If you don't want to do a thing, then don't do it. The only way to reform, is to stop, stop, stop! and go at once to doing something else."

The Taste for Drink Takes Care of Itself. The temperate Italian, with his daily semi-saturation, is no more a normal man than the Scotch farmer with his occasional sprees. The nerve disturbance which wine effects is an evil, whether carried to excess in regularity or irregularity. It is, moreover, true that most excess in the use of alcohol is not due to primitive appetite which seeks for drink. In a given number of drunkards but a very few become such through inborn appetite. It is the influence of bad example, lack of courage, false ideas of manliness, or some defect in character or misfortune in environment—which leads to the first step in drunkenness. The taste once established, takes care of itself. *David Starr Jordan.*

Where the Record is Kept. Could the young but realize how soon they will become mere bundles of habits, they would give more heed to their conduct while in the plastic state. Every smallest stroke of virtue or of vice, leaves a scar. The drunken man excuses himself from every fresh dereliction by saying, "I won't count this time." Well, he may not count it, and a kind Heaven may not count it, but it is being counted, none the less. Down among the nerve cells and fibers the molecules are counting it, registering and storing it up, to be used against him when the next temptation comes. Nothing we ever do is, in strict scientific literalness, wiped out. Of course, this has its good side as well as its bad one. As we become permanent drunkards by so many separate drinks, so we become saints in the moral, and authorities and experts in the practical and scientific spheres, by so many separate acts and hours of work. *William James.*

The Origin of The Band of Hope. When John H. Esterbrooke was visiting a drunken man and his wife in London and urging them to reform, the man said to him, "Mr. Esterbrooke, it's no use to preach to

us; we are lost; we must have gin and beer or we should go mad. If you want to do good, save the children from drink." This remark led Mr. Esterbrooke to hold temperance meetings for the children in the slums. Then, in 1847, he organized the children into the London Band of Hope.

Brave, yet Conquered by his Enemy. When the story was told of the way in which a marine orderly on the Maine, risking almost certain death to save his captain's life, went to Captain Sigsbee's cabin and touching his cap, calmly said: "Excuse me, sir—I have to report that the ship has blown up and is sinking," the whole nation rejoiced that this hero was among the few who were saved.

In less than two years after this, the papers of the country told the sad story of his end. Praised by every one, happily married, secure in a new position, he who had braved the dangers of that terrible event, could not brave the ills that followed his yielding to his appetite for drink. He sought it yet again, till at last a miserable outcast, mad with despair, he sat down in a public park in New York and put an end to his own life.

SENTENCE SERMONS

Drink is the mother of want and the nurse of crime. *Lord Brougham.*

It is not the last drink that ruins the man, but the first. *S. H. Hadley.*

Be sober and temperate, and you will be happy. *Benjamin Franklin.*

When a young man takes his first drink, he gives the devil an ironclad mortgage on himself. *Ram's Horn.*

Alcoholic liquor stupefies and besots. *Bismarck.*

It is absolutely impossible permanently or considerably to relieve poverty, until we get rid of the drink curse. *Shaftesbury.*

Reformation of the drinking habits of the people would settle all the social problems of Germany. *Bismarck.*

Intoxicating drink is the greatest factor of crime, pauperism, orphanhood, disease, and insanity. *F. W. Newman.*

The diminutive chains of habit are seldom heavy enough to be felt, until they are too strong to be broken. *Johnson.*

I have never known any drunkards who became drunkards by beginning to drink excessively, but I have known a good many who began by moderate drinking. *Charles M. Sheldon.*

To be perpetually longing and impatiently desirous of anything, so that a man can not abstain from it, is to lose a man's liberty, and to become a servant of meat and drink and smoke. *Jeremy Taylor.*

The injurious effect of alcohol on the entire development of the child is evident from the fact that children who drink spirituous liquors are noticeably stunted in growth. *Adolf Frick.*

The sight of means to do ill deeds, makes ill deeds done. *Shakespeare.*

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THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise. Prov. 20.1.

He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man: he that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich. Prov. 21.17.

Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. Luke 21.34.

Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. 1 Cor. 9.25.

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. 1 Cor. 3.16, 17.

Hearken, my son, and be wise,
And walk in the path of prudence.
Be not thou among winebibbers,
Among gluttonous eaters of flesh;
For drunkard and glutton come to poverty,
And drowsiness clothes them in rags. Prov. 23.19-21.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

It is a far more common thing for a man never to have done some given evil, never to have got drunk, never to have stolen, or the like, than to have done it only once. I have heard of a mysterious illness, in which at first medical analysis detected with difficulty one single bacterium in a great quantity of blood. But in a few days, so had they multiplied, that no drop could be taken from the veins which was not full of them. That is how men get under the slavery of any evil thing; the habit becomes stronger than anything except that "Strong Son of God, immortal Love" whose spirit can conquer it. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye that are wont to do evil, learn to do well." *Alexander Maclaren.*

THE LESSON SUMMARY

A series of questions holding up to view the woes of a drunkard. Look not on the wine, is the exhortation: shun its attractive appearance, its pleasing taste. Its poison affects the words and the sight of the drunkard, and, like the poison of the serpent, produces fatal consequences in the end. The lesson closes with a soliloquy of a drunkard who is past reformation, he "will seek it yet again."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Was Horace Greeley right in saying about drinking places that "the better these places are, the worse; and the worse they are, the better"?

2. Is the *Christian Advocate* right in this statement: "It were better that the beautiful flag of our country should never have been unfurled over the islands of the Pacific, than that we should allow the inhabitants to be cursed with the lowest and basest of our vices, instead of being blessed with the benefit of our Western freedom, culture, and civilization"?

3. Who shall dare refuse, though he be strong and steady, to build battlements at dangerous edges of his life, lest a weaker brother may fall where he stood safe! Can any pleasure of "unchartered freedom" justify the moral catastrophe which our self-confidence may provoke, our example encourage? Let the brotherhood of Jesus Christ remember the weak brother, and interpret Christian liberty in the light of Christian love. *Maltbie D. Babcock.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Review the two lessons on the Sermon on the Mount already studied. 2. Make a list of the topics of the Sermon given in the sixth and seventh chapters of Matthew. 3. How can we know whether or not we are Christians? 4. What does James say in his Epistle about doers and hearers of the word? (1.22-25; 2.14-20.) 5. What does Matthew say about the reward of those who are doers of the word and the punishment of those who are not? (25.31–46.) 6. What power was given to Judas, a "false prophet"? (Matt. 10.4–8.)

BETWEEN LESSON X, FIRST QUARTER, AND LESSON I, SECOND QUARTER

The Review and the Temperance lessons have interrupted our study of the Sermon on the Mount as given by Matthew. After the discourse that we studied March eleventh, Jesus talked about hypocritical alms-giving, praying and fasting. In connection with the words about praying to be seen of men, the model prayer is given. Then follow warnings against division of interest; treasure in Heaven is to be sought, not treasure on earth, no one can serve two Masters; cares and anxieties of life are to be put away, for the Heavenly Father who feeds the fowls of the air and clothes the flowers of the field, will not fail to feed and clothe His children. Lessons on judging others, degrading things holy, asking with faith, doing to others as you would be done by, are given. Wide is the gate and broad the road that leads to destruction, while straight is the gate and narrow the way that leads into life. (Matt. 6; 7.1–14.)

SECOND QUARTER

LESSON I—APRIL 1

THE TWO FOUNDATIONS

Matt. 7.15-29. (Read Matt. 6.1-7, 14; Luke 6.31, 37-49.) Commit vv. 24, 25.

Golden Text

Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only. James 1.22.

Time: Spring, A. D. 28.
Place: Horns of Hattin. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 25–27, and 34.

LESSON TEXT. MATT. 7.15–29

15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.
16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?
17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.
18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither *can* a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.
19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.
20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.
21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.
22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?
23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.
24 Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:
25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.
26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:
27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

28 And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine:
29 For he taught them as *one* having authority, and not as the scribes.

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WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

15. *Sheep's clothing.* The lamb or sheep has always been regarded as an image of innocence or harmlessness, and the wolf as one of violence, ferocity, injustice, and evil in every form. (See Matt. 10.16; John 10.12.) The sheep's clothing describes the plausibility, apparent honesty, and piety of deceitful teachers. *Schaeffer.*

21. *Lord, Lord.* The repetition shows that the profession of being His followers was ostentatious rather than genuine. The emphasis is on the word *saith.*

22. *In that day.* The great Day of Judgment. To *prophesy,* in the New Testament sense, means not merely to predict future events, but includes the whole work of gospel teaching. *Rice. In thy name,* R. V., *by thy name,* "under thy authority."

23. *Then will I profess unto them.* A plain claim of Christ's that He will be the Judge at the great day of reckoning. *I never knew you.* I never knew you as disciples. *Ye that work iniquity.* That do evil in thought, word, or deed.

29. *As one having authority, and not as the scribes.* The scribes spoke *by* authority, resting all they said upon tradition of what had been said before. Jesus spoke *with* authority, out of His own soul, with direct intuition of truth. *Bruce.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

16. *Do men gather grapes of thorns?* Jesus does not say, "Do men expect to gather grapes from thorns?" for He knew well that, strange as it seems, that is exactly what thousands do expect. His question is, "Do they ever succeed in finding them?" *G. H. Knight.*

21. *Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord.* Words are cheap and flow easily from the lips, especially when they may serve instead of wearisome efforts and persistent self-denial. The Mohammedan robber is loud in his vociferations that Allah is God, and Mohammed the prophet of Allah, but he remains a robber none the less. *Addison P. Foster.*

"And I remember still
The words, and from whence they came,
Not he that repeateth the name,
But he that doeth the will!
And Him evermore I behold
Walking in Galilee,

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Through the cornfield's waving gold,
By the shores of the Beautiful Sea.

. . . . . .

And that voice still soundeth on
From the centuries that are gone,
To the centuries that shall be!
From all vain pomps and shows,
From the pride that overflows,

. . . . . .

Poor, sad Humanity
Through all the dust and heat
Turns back with bleeding feet,
By the weary round it came,
Unto the simple thought,
By the great Master taught,
And that remaineth still:
Not he that repeateth the name
But he that doeth the will!" *Longfellow, Christus.*

22. *In thy name done many wonderful works.* It need not surprise us to find that men whom Jesus "never knew," yet claimed to be workers of miracles. In some cases, no doubt, the claim was without foundation. But Balaam was, for a season, truly inspired as a prophet, though he was very wicked, and died in his iniquity. Judas, doubtless, wrought miracles, as well as his associates, when they were sent out to preach and heal. . . . If men could speak by inspiration and work miracles without being truly pious, how great the danger that one may be a successful preacher, and yet not a Christian. *John A. Broadus.*

23. *Then will I profess unto them.* Can one conceive men living, as the apostles lived, with One Who they were led to believe was the ultimate Judge of their outward conduct and of their secret thoughts, the ultimate Arbiter of their destinies, the final Justice, without passing into an attitude towards Him of awe, trust, and worship, which would be idolatrous and disastrous if He to Whom it was directed was not divine?

Again, is it even conceivable that any man could claim to be in this inner introspective sense the final judge of all men without being either (with reverence be it spoken) a tremendous blasphemer or the very Son of God, of the Father's own nature? *Charles Gore.*

27. *Great was the fall of it.* Sooner or later in every man's life comes a time of testing. The rains descend, the floods come, the winds blow and beat on the structure of a lifetime. Does it stand or fall? That depends on how it is built. . . . Temptations are of almost infinite variety, and nearly every one who is not protected by divine grace has some weak point in his character, like Achilles' heel, where the poisoned arrow may enter. Here is no doubt the explanation of the terrible fall of some

Christians who have stood high before the world and have borne an unsullied reputation for years. The temptation to which they were vulnerable did not come for long, but when it did come, it was a landslide on the mountain side and the crash was great, and the seam in the mountain horrible. *A. P. Foster.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

19. *Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.* It is worthy of note that in Western Asia no tree is planted or even allowed to grow, unless its fruit commends it to the care of man. Fuel being scarce, all other trees are cut down: the poplar alone may be excepted, whose tall trunk is needed for house-building. *Van Lennep.*

24. *Built his house upon a rock.* At this very day the mode of building in Christ's own town of Nazareth suggests the source of this image. Doctor Robinson was entertained in the house of a Greek Arab. The house had just been built. In order to lay the foundations he had dug down to the solid rock, as is usual throughout the country there, to the depth of thirty feet, and then built up arches. *Kitto.*

27. *The rain descended and the floods came.* In all Western Asia the rains, though comparatively infrequent, are copious and heavy while they last. The uneven and often abrupt surface of the country, presenting steep mountain heights and deep valleys, occasions, during a storm, the rapid gathering of waters to a single point, so that mighty torrents suddenly appear rushing along through gorges where not a drop of water trickled a moment before. These pour down with terrible force, often tearing away rocks and trees, and sweeping all before them. Houses erected near their track are in imminent danger of being carried away by the angry floods. Should there be any weakness in their foundation, the rushing waters soon work their way beneath, and, undermining the building, bear it away bodily. *Van Lennep.* The Arabs say that *wadies* in time of flood are "not rivers, but seas."

When people in these regions speak of the strength of a house, it is not by affirming "It will last so many years," but, "It will withstand the rains: it will not be injured by the floods." Only the house founded upon a rock can withstand the rains and floods of a wet monsoon. *Roberts, Oriental Illustrations.*

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. We read in fairy lore of how chasms have been bridged over in a single night by benevolent spirits. They hustle vast rocks together and pile them one upon another, and build piers and span them with arches, so that the favorite knights can pass over them to the castle and carry off their imprisoned lovers. Sometimes, while the hero

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sleeps, these fairy powers construct whole cities. With tens of millions of hands they carry up walls and surmount them with golden towers, and in the morning, whole cities stand where, the night before, there was only a wilderness.

How pleasing for their unheard-of wonders are fairy stories! Yet there is something more wonderful actually going on within every man. There are buildings going up for eternity. There is not a thought that is not striking a blow; there is not an impulse that is not doing mason work; there is not a passion darting this way or that that is not a workman's thrust. There are as many master-workmen in you as there are separate faculties, and there are as many blows being struck as there are separate emotions and separate thoughts and separate volitions.

Thus the work is going on perpetually. Every day the myriad forces are building, building, building, and the great structure of character is going up point by point and story by story, to remain for ever. *David Gregg.*

For Older Pupils. A month ago to-day we had our first lesson from the Sermon on the Mount, the lesson of the Beatitudes. (By questioning, recall the lessons taught.) Three weeks ago we had another lesson from this Sermon. (Review.) The Review and the Temperance lessons have interrupted this study. To-day our lesson text contains the last words of the Sermon on the Mount as given in Matthew's Gospel. Who can give the topics of the last part of the Sermon narrated in chapter 6 and in the first fourteen verses of chapter 7? (Alms, prayer, forgiveness, fasting, treasures, serving God or Mammon, worldly cares, God's care, rash judgment, God answers prayer, golden rule, the straight gate.)

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. False and True Christians

Deceptive Deeds. "I knew a college fellow," says Doctor Lyman Abbott, "who was pretentiously pious and constitutionally lazy. He was always at his class prayer-meeting, and always unprepared in recitation. An eccentric professor once rebuked him before the class in the following manner:

"'You're a professor of religion, aren't you?'

"'Yes, sir.'

"'And a member of the Society of Inquiry?'

"'Yes, sir.'

"'And of the Missionary Band?'

"'Yes, sir.'

"'And always at the class prayer-meeting?'

"'Generally, sir.'

"'Yes, and always unprepared; never have your lesson; hopelessly lazy.

Well, I can see through your piety; and I guess the Lord's as far-sighted as I am!'"

Our Character Book. In Germany, every servant is obliged to keep a character book in which the mistress writes the date of engagement, and, on the departure of the servant, the date and her estimate of the servant's character and work. To prevent the writing of false recommendations, the servant is obliged to go to the nearest police station and have each record dated with the official stamp. Are not those who falsely claim the name of Christian constantly showing that their character book is spurious?

The fruits of the Holy Spirit, as given by the apostle, are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, faith, meekness, and temperance. As C. Hanford Henderson has well said: "The good farmer is not the one who raises poor crops; the good engineer is not the one whose structures collapse; the good captain is not the one who runs his ship on the rocks; the good doctor is not the one who kills his patients. Neither, let us for ever bear in mind, is the good man the one who misses living a good life."

Soul Revealers. Doctor Emerson E. White in an address on character has shown how the true and the false in our lives are constantly being revealed to others: "If a post-mortem examination could show the tracings of the life in the soul, how humiliating, what scars! And yet, this record is kept. How startling if we could see it! When life closes not an erasure has been made.

"We do not go through the world veiled. We wear life on the outside, as we wear our clothing. The first soul revealer is the temper. The temper is the soul's publisher.

"Another medium is the face. The eye is the *camera lucida.* The face is an open show-board. The face speaks a universal language, a language known by every human heart. It is the life back of the face that makes the face beautiful. 'Quite the ugliest person I ever saw,' said Whittier, 'was a woman whom the world at first glance would call beautiful.'

"The voice is another revealer. The voice is a harp tuned by divine art. In its compass is all of human experience—joy and grief. There would be no discord in the voice if there were not discord in the life.

"The most subtle revealers of a man are his manners. The manners are a compound of form and spirit. The wise man takes off his hat in a different way from the fool. The heart is a telegraphic battery with a thousand wires. There is a sacred connection between the heart and the life, between the affections and the manners. A noble and attractive bearing comes of goodness of heart, of refinement of nature.

"Our language is a great revealer. Speech is gold when the soul has gold to put into it, and sounding brass when there is but brass back of it. If genuine character is within, it will manifest itself. If angels are within, they will show themselves, as well as imps of darkness."

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II. Foundation Laying

The Wise and the Foolish Builders. The wise builder knew that storms would come and test his work, and he dug deep down into the earth until he came to the solid rock, and on that he built up his house. The foolish builder thought not of the coming storm, but built only for the present sunny days, just as a child builds his sand house on the sea-shore and thinks not of the incoming tide.

"The rock," says Doctor E. H. Plumptre, "can be nothing else than the firm foundation of repentance and obedience, the assent of the will and affections as well as the lips. The sand answers to the shifting, uncertain feelings which are with some men the only ground on which they act—love of praise, respect for custom, and the like. . . .

"Personal experience and the teaching of the spirit led men to the thought that there must be a yet deeper foundation, a rock below the rock of obedience and holiness, and they found in Christ Himself, that Rock and that Foundation (1 Cor. 3.10, 11 . Only in a personal union with Him could they find the stability of will without which even their firmest purposes would be as the shifting sand."

Work that will Endure. It was only a five-year-old town away up on the Canadian side of the line, in the heart of the Rockies, and on the preceding day its entire business section had been wiped out by fire. Three acres were swept bare of everything; and a forlorn looking town it was when I first stepped from a railroad carriage into its smoking ruins. Here and there an iron safe or brick vault stood alone, and in a fire-swept space a tall chimney raised itself some twenty feet into the air.

Just then I met two laborers carrying a large sign-board between them. As they traced their steps amongst the debris towards the chimney, I watched them. And then I read the flaring notice as they placed it against the solid brick pile. "This chimney was built by Creighton and Thorn in April, 1899, who are still doing business in this town."

"A good advertisement," I thought, "and without doubt those builders will have a large hand in the rearing of the new town." And what a lesson was there here for all builders! Let us do our work well; it will pay in the long run. We are all builders; we are building character. Let us see to the foundation; let it be laid deep and strong. As to the structure itself, let it be of the best material; let it be of the stuff that will stand the test of fire; let it be built carefully and surely, with an eye to the future and to the scrutiny of the Master-Builder, and to the day of the testing. *D. McKeen Reid.*

Cost of Laying Foundations. Laying the foundations is usually the costliest and most important work in the building of any structure. This work is commonly below the surface, and out of sight. It attracts comparatively little attention, and it makes small show in proportion

to the finished superstructure, yet it is worth relatively more than all the remainder. Without the expensive and tedious work of foundation-laying underground, any superstructure of the loftiest spire, or tower, or pier, or station, or warehouse, or mansion, in man's sight, has no sure stability for its permanent use. Foundation-laying often costs more and takes longer than all the rest of the showiest building; yet this time and expense are well laid out. As it is with other structures, so it is with man's physical, intellectual, and moral structure—its permanent value depends on its foundations. *Sunday School Times.*

Character built on Christ's Precepts. Day after day we add stone on stone to the foundations of our character. "Every act," says Ruskin, "is a foundation stone of future conduct." The boy or girl whose every act is true will find it easy to maintain true conduct as he grows older. As Aristotle has said, "The harper is not made otherwise than by harping, nor the just man otherwise than by doing just deeds."

In the Arctic Ocean, icebergs are seen forcing their way steadily onward, even in the face of a strong gale. Seemingly afloat on the surface, what power directs their course? These mountains of ice extend far below the surface of the ocean, and it is the deep undercurrent in the ocean that bears them onward. The character that rests on the precepts of Christ, is directed in its onward course by a power that overcomes all adverse winds and tides.

III. Be Ye doers of the word, and not hearers only

Are we Doing the Sayings of Christ? This beautiful illustration (verses 24–27) makes its own impressions: He who hears the words of Christ, and does them, is safe against all the evil influences of the world, safe for ever; he who simply hears, and does not do, is doomed to fail of salvation, and be crushed in utter destruction. . . . There is mournful danger in every age that men will hear Christ's servants preach, and will themselves read in His written word, and stop at that, without doing according to that which they hear or read. It is a most momentous question for every one of us, Am I doing the sayings of the Lord? *John A. Broadus.*

What we need is not to be told what we ought to be, but to be enabled to be it. Electricity can light the road, and it can drive the car along it; and that is what we want, a dynamic as well as an illuminant, something that will make us able to do and to be what conscience has told us we ought to do and be. *Alexander Maclaren.*

Here is where many professed disciples of Jesus fail of being real disciples. They have regularly enlisted, have put on their uniforms, and there they stand before the recruiting office, with knapsack and blanket on their backs, with muskets at "carry," and marking time to martial music—although some of them don't even do that—and there they have stood since their enlistment, never marching a rod. *H. Clay Trumbull.*

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Knowledge Translated into Action. It is not the amount of food that one eats, but the amount of food that one assimilates, that builds up the tissues of one's body; it is not the number of spiritual truths that one discerns, but the number of spiritual truths that one transforms into character, that builds up a Christian life. As Doctor Woodrow Wilson says: "I take it that knowledge is a pretty poor commodity of itself and by itself. A ship doesn't sail by its cargo. The truths that are not translated into lives are dead truths."

Do not Let good Resolutions Die. Professor James in his "Psychology" gives this good advice:

"Seize the very first possible opportunity to act on every resolution you make, and on every emotional prompting you may experience in the direction of the habits you aspire to gain. . . . No matter how full a reservoir of *maxims* one may possess, and no matter how good one's *sentiments* may be, if one has not taken advantage of every concrete opportunity to *act,* one's character may remain entirely unaffected for the better. With mere good intentions, hell is proverbially paved. . . . Every time a resolution or a fine glow of feeling evaporates without bearing practical fruit, it is worse than a chance lost; it works so as positively to hinder future resolutions and emotions from taking the normal path of discharge."

"Quiet and peace from steady will
To do the things that I must do,
And joy in trying to fulfil
My every duty through and through.
This is my plan, and I shall seek
To make its value doubly sure,
By acting where I used to speak,
And striving where I did endure."

Daniel Kelley, in Lippincott's.

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From saying to doing is a long stretch. *French Proverb.*

It is well to think well: it is divine to act well. *Horace Mann.*

Words are good when backed up by deeds, and only so. *Roosevelt.*

Life is a quarry, out of which we are to mold, and chisel, and complete a character. *Goethe.*

How can I hear what you say, when what you are is thundering in my ears? *Emerson.*

The words of Jesus in the mind of one who does not do the will of Jesus, lie like seed-corn in a mummy's hand. *Van Dyke.*

Any man feels instinctively that all the beautiful sentiments in the world weigh less than a single lovely action. *Lowell.*

Ability never amounts to much until it acquires two more letters—*st*ability. *Saturday Evening Post.*

Wisdom is knowing what to do, virtue is doing it. *David S. Jordan.*

It is with youth as with plants: from the first fruits they bear, we learn what may be expected in the future. *Demophilus.*

Samson did not know his strength until the young lion roared against him. *G. A. Gordon.*

If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be; now put foundations under them. *Thoreau.*

From building on the sand and not on the rock; from gaining though it were the whole world and losing your own soul, deliver us, Lord Jesus. *Christina Rossetti.*

Saying "Lord" includes taking Jesus for Master, and listening to His teaching with appreciation and admiration; everything short of carrying out His teaching in life. *Bruce.*

Acts, seemingly virtuous, are often nothing more than the sheep's clothing in which the wolf wraps himself in order that he may deceive and devour the sheep. *Wordsworth.*

We should make our notch every day in our character, as Robinson Crusoe on his stick. *Thoreau.*

A flaw in the foundation is pretty sure to be followed by a crack in the superstructure. *Spurgeon.*

If you were a statue of Phidias, you would remember both yourself and the artist, and you would endeavor to be in no way unworthy of him who formed you, nor of yourself: and are you now careless how you appear, when you are the workmanship of God himself? *Epictetus.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. 2 Pet. 2.1.

They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate. Tit. 1.16.

Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. John 15.2.

And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? Luke 16.46.

If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth. 1 John 1.6.

My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. 1 John 3.18.

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For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. Romans 2.13.

I know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father. John 10.14, 15.

For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. John 5.22, 27.

Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. 1 Cor. 3.11-13.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Childhood hands over to boyhood a character which boyhood must develop, amidst its frolic and struggle, towards either evil or good: youth receives the moral results of boyhood, adds to them its own, and then hands on the work to manhood to complete, to be either made or marred. *A. M. Fairbairn.*

THE LESSON SUMMARY

The righteousness required in God's kingdom is the subject of our Lord's teaching in the Sermon on the Mount. By contrasting this with various spurious forms of righteousness, He shows the ruin that results from false pretensions. This He does by means of three figures: (1) The mere pretender is like the wolf in sheep's clothing; you can not turn a wolf into a sheep by merely putting on it from the outside a fleece. (2) Or he is like a thorn-bush that has artificial flowers and fine fruits stuck on it. It may for a time excite the admiration of the ignorant, but the tree remains wholly unaffected. (3) Or he is like a man who builds a superb mansion, sparing neither pains nor cost upon it, and yet neglecting the one essential that it should have—a foundation. . . .

Time is all that is required to test anything. The wolf may pretend to be a sheep for an hour or two, but his natural appetite soon reveals him; the tree makes a fair show till autumn tests it. So mere reputations are short-lived. Some sudden temptation may reveal to others, and even to a man himself, that his most rooted motives are not what his conduct indicates. Other reputations survive all the storms of life, and a man passes to another world undetected by himself or others. But the evil day is thereby only delayed. Under the eye of Christ all disguises must drop off, and we shall be known for what we are. The catastrophe of which we are forewarned can be arrested by spending pains on the foundation. *Marcus Dods.*

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Is success in Christian work a proof of a Christian life, or apparent want of success a proof of the opposite?

2. The Christian church is not a place where correctness of opinion is guarded and maintained; nor a cold-storage warehouse for uncorrupted truths; it is not merely a place of religious utterance, or of religious symbolism, or a gymnasium of ritual for the calisthenics of the soul. It is, to use the language of our modern life, a "power-house," where there is generated a supply of spiritual energy sufficient to move the world with wisdom, courage and peace. Let this power fail, and a church stands in the midst of modern life without adequate reason for existence, a Sunday club, an entertainment bureau, a survival of the days when religion was real. A living church communicates power. The tree is known by its fruit. *Francis G. Peabody.*

3. Time is all that is required to test anything. The wolf may pretend to be a sheep for an hour or two, but his natural appetite soon reveals him; the tree makes a fair show till autumn tests it. So many reputations are short-lived. Some sudden temptation may reveal to others, and even to a man himself, that his most rooted motives are not what his conduct indicates. Other reputations survive all the storms of life, and a man passes to another world undetected by himself or others. But the evil day is thereby only delayed. *Marcus Dods.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Continue your Life of Christ throughout this quarter, writing each day's lesson at home after the class lesson. 2. Where in the Bible are the Ten Commandments given? (Ex. 20.3-17.) 3. Which commandment is in regard to the keeping of the Sabbath Day? (Ex. 20.8-11.) 4. What does the word *Sabbath* mean? 5. Name some things that you think should be done on Sunday. 6. Name some things that you think should not be done on Sunday. 7. Would you rather be guided by a principle or by definite rules? 8. In the lesson for February 18, how did Jesus spend the Sabbath? 9. Look up these references to Jesus and the Sabbath in Mark 6.2; Luke 4.16; 6.6-10; 13.10-16.

BETWEEN LESSON I AND LESSON II

The Lesson Committee has followed Matthew in placing the Sabbath controversy of Lesson II after the Sermon on the Mount. Mark and Luke give it before the Sermon. We know only that it must have occurred between the beginning of the barley and the end of the wheat harvest.

JESUS AND THE SABBATH

Matt. 12.1-14. (Read Mark 2.23-3.6; Luke 6.1-11.) Commit vv. 7, 8.

Golden Text

**Remember the Sabbath Day
to keep it holy. Ex. 20.8.**

Time: A. D. 28.
Place: Galilee. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 28, 29, and 67.

LESSON TEXT. MATT. 12.1-14.

1 At that time Jesus went on the sabbath day through the corn; and his disciples were an hungred, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat.
2 But when the Pharisees saw *it,* they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the sabbath day.
3 But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungred, and they that were with him;
4 How he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests?
5 Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless?
6 But I say unto you, That in this place is *one* greater than the temple.
7 But if ye had known what *this* meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless.
8 For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day.
9 And when he was departed thence, he went into their synagogue:
10 And, behold, there was a man which had *his* hand withered. And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days? that they might accuse him.
11 And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift *it* out?
12 How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days.
13 Then saith he to the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched *it* forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other.
14 Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against him, how they might destroy him.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *At that time.* When Jesus uttered the words recorded in the preceding chapter. *Went through the corn.* There were no fences in

Palestine, and few hedges. Paths were made through the fields of grain; wagon roads were unknown, except a few great military roads made by the Romans. *Rice. Corn.* A general term for grain. If it was the barley harvest, the time would be probably the beginning of May; if wheat harvest, about the beginning of June. *Williams.*

3. *He said unto them.* The three accounts in the Gospels give five arguments of Jesus: the example of David, the example of the priests, mercy rather than sacrifice, Sabbath for man, Christ, the Lord of the Sabbath.

4. *The shew bread.* Twelve loaves were placed in rows upon a table in the holy place, as a symbol of the communion of God with men. They were renewed every seven days, on the Sabbath, the old loaves being eaten by the priests. David probably came on the day the old loaves were taken away, *i. e.*, on the Sabbath; which makes the case very appropriate. David did what was actually forbidden (Lev. 24.9), yet hunger was a sufficient justification; much more might the constructive transgression of the disciples be justified by their hunger. *Schaff.*

5. *Read in the law,* in Lev. 24.8 and Numbers 28.9, 10. *The priests profane the Sabbath.* The priests were directed to offer certain sacrifices on the Sabbath, more, in fact, than on other days—though to do so required the slaying of animals and other acts prohibited on the Sabbath, which under any other circumstances would profane the Sabbath. *Broadus.*

6. *One greater.* Jesus Himself.

7. Quoted from Hos. 6.6. *Mercy.* R. V., *goodness.* The meaning of the quotation is, "Had you learned the simple Bible truth, that God places the exercise of your moral qualities, particularly those of kindness, above merely external observances, you would not have committed this sin of taking up the position of wrong judges. *Williams.* Mercy stands here for the spirit of the law, and sacrifice for its letter. *Taylor.*

8. *The Son of man . . . day.* It is as if Christ had said: "You have been condemning these men unjustly. They are entirely innocent. It is enough that I say so,—for I am the Lord of the Sabbath. Its law is My law, and if I am satisfied, that is enough." *Thomas Hamilton.*

9. *He went into their synagogue.* Luke 6.6 says it was on another Sabbath.

10. *Hand withered.* Paralyzed, shriveled. The rabbis claimed that it was lawful to heal on the Sabbath only when life was in danger.

11. In the Talmud some rabbis maintained that it was enough when a beast fell into a pit to give it food; others said, put something under it to lie on, and if by means of this it climbs out, all right; others said, take it out with the intention of killing it, even though afterwards you change your mind and preserve it. To such silly evasions were men driven by the attempt to convert morality into a mere system of rules. Jesus appeals to common sense, asking whether any one present would fail in such a case to preserve his property. *Broadus.*

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SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

6. *In this place is one greater than the temple.* In all His dealings with His bitterest foes, Jesus never in the least degree lowers His dignity, but rather asserts it in the boldest and strongest terms. Must there not have been something heavenly majestic in His look and bearing when words like these were allowed to pass unchallenged by such men? *John Monro Gibson.*

8. *The Son of man is Lord of the sabbath day.* Sometimes there is found buried in one of our Irish bogs, a golden ornament, which, centuries ago, had fastened the mantle of some Celtic chieftain. Through the damps and neglects of ages it has become green and disfigured, so as almost completely to have lost, not only the beauty of workmanship which once adorned it, but even the very appearance of gold. When it comes into the hands of one who recognizes its preciousness, and when he carefully cleanses away the accretions which have gathered round it, does this action of his proceed from a disregard of his "find" and from a desire to destroy it? On the contrary, is not his cleansing of the ornament reverent and thorough in proportion to the value which he sets upon it, and to the strength of his wish that it may exhibit again its pristine beauty? So with our Lord's treatment of the Sabbath. He found it buried amid a mass of traditional observances which had thrown its meaning and spirit almost altogether into obscurity. He took it up lovingly, recognizing its beauty and value, and with firm but kindly hand removed the foreign incrustations which had gathered round it, that it might shine again in its own native luster for the joy and blessing of a needy world. *Thomas Hamilton.*

14. *The Pharisees held a council against him.* Alas! What inconsistency! So anxious to keep the Sabbath, yet themselves breaking it, by plotting to destroy a life! So devoted to the Jewish nationality and yet consorting with the Herodians (Mark 3.6), who were the pronounced upholders of the Roman domination over the Jews. *William M. Taylor, Miracles of our Saviour.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

2. *That which is not lawful.* Six times, either directly or indirectly, Jesus was accused of Sabbath-breaking. When the Pharisees speak of what is lawful or unlawful, they refer not only to God's laws in the Old Testament but to their own interpretations of those laws. The rabbis had made thirty-nine "primary rules" and countless "derivative rules" about what could not lawfully be done on the Sabbath. On any other day of the week it would have been lawful and customary for the disciples or others to pluck enough ears of corn (barley), or bunches of grapes to satisfy hunger, but on the Sabbath Day they broke two of the

thirty-nine "primary rules," for the rabbis said, to pluck ears of corn is a kind of reaping, and to rub them in their palms is a kind of threshing.

"The rules of the rabbis were so minute in what Origen calls their frigid traditions," says Farrar in his *Life of Lives,* "that you might put wine on your eyelid on the Sabbath, but not into your eye, because that is healing, and you might put vinegar into your mouth for a toothache, but might not rinse your mouth with it!"

In order to make the Sabbath laws more bearable, the rabbis had certain ways of avoiding them, which they termed *Erubin,* "connections." Edersheim tells us that "For this purpose, it is explained how places, beyond which it would otherwise have been unlawful to carry things, may be connected together, so as, by a legal fiction, to convert them into a sort of private dwelling. Narrow streets or blind alleys were connected by laying a beam over the entrance, or extending a wire or rope along such streets and alleys. This, by a legal fiction, made them 'a private dwelling,' so that everything was lawful there which a man might do on the Sabbath in his own house." . . . Shall we wonder at Christ's opposition to the Sabbath ordinances of the Synagogue or, on the other hand, at the enmity of its leaders? And can greater contrast be imagined than between the teaching of Christ on this subject, and that of His most learned and most advanced contemporaries? And whence this difference, unless Christ was the 'Teacher come from God,' who spake as never before man had spoken?"

Announcing the Sabbath

2. *The Sabbath Day.* As the sun set, the beginning of the Sabbath was announced by three blasts of a trumpet, from the roof of the spacious synagogue of the town. The first blast warned the peasants in the far-stretching vineyards and gardens, to cease their toil; the second was the signal for the townsfolk to close their business for the week; and the third for all to kindle the holy Sabbath light which was to burn till the sacred day was past." *Cunningham Geikie, Life of Christ.*

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. We read in the Bible that the brazen serpent which Moses had lifted up in the darkness, had been preserved to the

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time of Hezekiah; that is, about seven centuries. What a sacred relic it was, and how worthy of preservation! If modern Christians had only such a relic as this—so authentic and holy—how would they prize it! But Hezekiah found that it had become an object of worship, therefore he broke it in pieces, and called it "Nehushtan," which means, "a piece of brass." This must have greatly shocked the feelings of the Israelites. This was, indeed, a sacred relic, and seemed worthy of veneration. Think of his destroying it and calling it a piece of brass! So the Jews felt when Jesus said, "The Sabbath is made for man, not man for the Sabbath." *James Freeman Clarke.*

For Older Pupils. In some of the coal-mining districts of England there is found a curious deposit which the miners call "Sunday stone." On examining a section of a piece, it is seen to consist of layers of stalagmitic matter regularly superimposed on each other, with this peculiarity, that after six strata of a blackish hue, there appears, with the utmost regularity, one stratum of pure white—then six more of the black, with a seventh of the white, and so on through the entire thickness of the deposit. The explanation of this remarkable formation is easy. Down in the coal-mine, water, filtering through the limestone roof, becomes highly impregnated with carbonate of lime. Dropping on the floor in a continual trickle, this forms a deposit. While the miners are at work, the coal dust which pervades the atmosphere, mingling with the dropping water, imparts a blackish hue to the deposit. But when the Day of Rest comes round, on which the mine is quiet, the water, having nothing to sully its purity, deposits the layer of beautifully white mineral.

We find recurring at its regular septenary intervals in the course of the world's affairs, this white marked day. Six days the dust of the world's business darkens. That day is free from it, more or less. We are so familiar with it that it strikes us as nothing strange that over all Christendom, after every six days of toil, comes one of intermission, devoted to rest by common consent. But surely a most impressive thought is that thus over all the earth, from Labrador to the Coral Isles, from India in the East to the Rocky Mountains in the West, this Day of Rest is kept—kept by people of many different races: Anglo-Saxon, Celtic, Teutonic, Slav; of many creeds: Protestant, Latin Church, Greek Church; and kept through age after age as far back as history carries us. *Thomas Hamilton.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. The Need of One Day In Seven For Rest

All Things, Animate and Inanimate, Need Occasional Rest. Scientists tell us that telegraph wires are better conductors on Monday than on Saturday, when they have had a Sunday rest. They even tell us that some

jewels require an occasional sleep, as it were, in order to retain their brilliancy. Diamonds, rubies, and sapphires look "rested and refreshed" after being put away in total darkness for a time.

"Sunday is God's special present to the working-man. In the economy of life it answers the same purpose as in the economy of income is answered by a savings-bank."

"That day is not lost," wrote Macaulay, "while industry is suspended, while the plough lies in the furrow, while the Exchange is silent, while no smoke ascends from the factory. A process is going on quite as important to the welfare of the nation as any process that is performing on more busy days. Man, the machine of machines, the machine compared with which the contrivances of the Wattses and the Arkwrights and the Bessemers are worthless, is repairing and winding up so that he returns to his labor on Monday with clearer intellect, with livelier spirit, and with renewed bodily vigor."

When Gladstone was asked to speak into a phonograph that the record might be made for use fifty years hence, this was his message: "I owe my life and vigor, through a long and busy life, to the Sabbath Day with its blessed surcease of toil!"

The Christian Sunday, like the Jewish Sabbath, is a Day of Rest. The Egyptians, Chaldeans, Peruvians, and other nations of the earliest times as well as the Jews, divided time into periods of seven days. The Greeks had a week of ten days, and the Romans a week of eight days, but they changed to the one of seven days. During the French Revolution one holiday in every ten days was established as sufficient, but after trying this plan for twelve years the French gladly returned to a day of rest in every seven.

After the Resurrection of Christ on the first day of the week, His followers observed that day, Sunday, as a sacred day, until, as Alcuin, writing at the close of the eighth century, says, "The observance of the former Sabbath (Saturday) has been transferred very fitly to the Lord's Day, by the custom and consent of the people." "The Christian Sabbath," Jonathan Edwards explains, "in the sense of the fourth commandment, is as much the seventh day as the Jewish Sabbath; because it is kept every seventh day as much as that; it is kept after six days of labor as well as that; it is the seventh, reckoning from the beginning of our first working day, as well as that was the seventh day from the beginning of their first working day."

Sunday Rest in Norway. Sunday rest is complete in Norway. The railroads belong to the state, and a special appropriation is made so that the number of railroad employees is sufficient to allow one Sunday in three for rest for each one. Street-cars do not run on Sunday morning. No newspapers are printed on that day, and no bread is baked. All stores, factories, and liquor saloons are closed from five P. M. on Saturday till eight A. M. on Monday.

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II. How Sunday Should Not Be Spent

Senator Frye's Opinion. The Puritan Sunday was too caste in its rules; but, in my opinion, better for the interest of man and beast than the license of the modern Sunday in our great cities. England, Scotland, and the Canadian provinces are in advance of us in the observance of the Sabbath Day. We are gradually, but certainly, opening the doors of traffic and amusement, our railroads being the leaders in these regards. Laws recognizing the Lord's Day as one dedicated to worship, to works of charity, and to rest from labor should be enforced.

The French and the English Sabbath. Montalembert, one of the most eminent French statesmen, in speaking about the English observance of Sunday, said:

"Men are surprised sometimes by the ease with which the immense city of London is kept in order by a garrison of three small battalions and two squadrons; while to control the capital of France, which is half the size, forty thousand troops of the line, and sixty thousand national guards are necessary. But the stranger who arrives in London on a Sunday morning, when he sees everything of commerce suspended in that gigantic capital in obedience to God; when, in the center of that colossal business, he finds silence and repose scarcely interrupted by the bells which call to prayer, and the immense crowds on their way to church, then his astonishment ceases."

General Grant's Firm Stand. When General Grant was in Paris, the President of the Republic invited him to attend the Sunday races. He knew that to refuse such an invitation from the President would be considered by the French people especially discourteous, and yet he politely declined the invitation, saying that "It is not in accord with the custom of my country, or with the spirit of my religion, to spend Sunday in that way."

Sabbath-breaking Nations. The Sabbathless and Sabbath-breaking nations are poor. Poor physically—Italy once, and France twice in ten years have cut down their standards for soldiers; poor mentally—they have the greatest illiteracy; poor morally—they have the most vice; poor financially—their workmen, despite longer hours per day and one more day in the week, get the lowest wages; and they are also the worst off politically, vibrating between the extremes of despotism and anarchy. *Wilbur F. Crafts.*

It does not seem to me accidental that Switzerland, Scotland, England, and the United States, the countries which best observe Sunday, constitute almost the entire map of safe popular government. *Joseph Cook.*

III. How Sunday Should be Spent

Christ's Example. In the critical hour of Christ's life He went up to

the village synagogue on the stated day of rest. What? Had He not risen above that? Could the dull preachings and the drawling prayers say anything to Him? What charm could He longer feel in these childish Sabbath usages? The decent dress, the restful hours, the flowing together of families, the walking to the house of God in company? Did not He above all live in a constant air of divine communion? Do what He might, go where He would, was He not always with the Father—Himself a better Sanctuary than He could ever find? Yet, at Nazareth, where He had been brought up, He went, as His custom was, into the synagogue on the Sabbath day. *Martineau.*

As His Custom was. These four words that tell us so much about the way in which Christ observed the Sabbath, need to be emphasized. "As His custom was." Do we all make His custom ours?

"There is a discrepancy between our creed about the Sabbath day and our actual conduct," says John McNeill. "In many families at ten o'clock on Sunday, attendance at church is still an open question. There is no open question on Monday morning—'John, shall you go to work to-day?'"

Church Attendance. A Boston pastor cautioning his people against the "seductive seriousness of Sunday storms," said: "A few inches of snow, or a drizzle of rain on Sunday takes the resolution out of strong men, and for women, far from invalidism, makes worship quite out of the question. The same amount of weather on Monday would be laughed at as an 'obstacle.' O, for that in us that will make and keep us waterproof on the Lord's Day!"

The Sunday Should be a Day for Spiritual Growth. A great statesman was requested to grant a business interview on Sunday. He replied, saying, "I *must* keep one day in which to realize what I am and where I am going."

The souls of us all are liable to many agitations, regrets, envies, ambitions, bitter disappointments, ungovernable desires. These make the soul like one of those Kaffir huts which is so full of idols that the owner can scarce move in it. Among these ugly and multitudinous idols there can be no room for Christ. Sunday may be a constant help to prevent their accumulation and their dominance.

"He was born a man," said a French epitaph, "and died a grocer." In other words, he merged the sacredness of his manhood in the pursuits of his shop. His heart had been so ossified by the benumbing pursuits of his trade, that men had ceased to think of him as a man at all. How many a tradesman, how many a business man, how many a clerk, spending day after day, week after week, month after month, year after year, at the same desk, over the same ledgers, at the same accounts, till the frame is bent and the brow wrinkled, runs the same risks! His soul is liable to be,

"Subdued to what it works in, like the dyer's hand."

The work itself may be right, necessary, honorable; but if the life ends

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with it, if the soul is absorbed in it, if the great heart and divine spirit of the man become dwarfed and dried up in feverish devotion to it, how mean and miserable is the total failure of the life!

Now the weekly recurrent Sunday reminds us that, behind the clerk or the tradesman or the toiler, stands the *man,* who is something transcendently greater, the man made in God's image, the heir of immortality.

The ordinance of Sunday is most precious, because it may snatch us again and again from the perils of temptation. How many of the world's most deadly sins might have been prevented, if, in the crisis of temptation, some friend could have stood by us; some hand touched us; some kind voice have whispered to us, "Beware!" Such a friend, such a voice, such a hand may Sunday be to us! By its silent recurrence it may recall our thoughts from the evil purpose, our souls from the vain desire, our feet from the guilty path. It may be to us as a herald, sent from Heaven to save this frail barque of our lives out of the overwhelming billows. How often, at the best, does the anchor slip and drag! How often does the fierce wind drive us helplessly towards the iron shore! Amid these storms the day of God comes to remind us of Him Who, if we seek Him, will be the pilot of our course, and guide us to the Heaven where we would be. *F. W. Farrar, in The Voice from Sinai.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Christ was always a foe to mere formalism.

Sunday is the soul's library and cathedral day. *Hillis.*

He who ordained the Sabbath loves the poor. *Holmes.*

Christ accomplished, interpreted, and revised the Old Testament Scriptures. *van Dyke.*

Shall God allow thee six days, and will thou not afford Him one? *Bunyan.*

There are many persons who think Sunday is a sponge with which to wipe out the sins of the week. *Beecher.*

The Sabbath is not forced on us as an irksome obligation, but granted to us as a precious boon. *Farrar.*

Our piety is suspicious if we can't forgo needless sleep, and rise to begin the Lord's Day with God. *Channing.*

It is a sin when low things, however good in themselves, stand in the way of high things. *Rufus Ellis.*

The savings-bank of human existence is the weekly Sabbath, Sunday. *North British Review.*

Those men who find their temple in the field, and ask nature to be their priest, have ended by losing all sense of worship until they worship less truly than do the beasts of the field. *Collyer.*

The proposal to make the Sabbath a day of pleasure deals with man as

a mere animal, to be amused, and leaves out of sight altogether that he has a soul to be lost or saved. *Thomas Hamilton.*

A week filled up with selfishness and the Sabbath stuffed full of religious exercises, will make a good Pharisee, but a poor Christian. *Beecher.*

He that brings much of the week with him into the Sabbath, will have the sure Nemesis of taking little of the Sabbath back with him into the week. *C. B. Blenkin.*

How many of us keep our religion in our pews along with our hymn-books, or put it away in a drawer on Sunday night with our Sunday clothes, to lie there till next Sunday comes round? *Maclaren.*

The waste and selfish desecration of the Sunday, and the flinging away of its golden opportunities, is, I believe, to thousands of youths, the first decisive step in the down-hillward course of moral degeneracy, and of spiritual death: Sunday stands for the young man at the parting of the ways, of which one leads to God, and one to perdition. *Farrar.*

The stability and character of our country, the advancement of our race, depend very largely on the mode in which the day of rest, which seems to have been specially adapted to the needs of mankind, shall be used and observed. *John Bright.*

Let our Sunday rest be neither sensual, nor frivolous, nor selfish, but gladly spiritual; a day not only to rest but to ennoble; a day to remind us who we are, and whither we go, and whence we come. *Farrar.*

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When thou comest into the standing corn of thy neighbor, then thou mayest pluck the ears with thine hand; but thou shalt not move a sickle unto thy neighbor's standing corn. Deut. 23.25.

The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. 2 Cor. 3.6.

But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. Rom. 7.6.

He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? Micah 6.8.

Blessed is the son of man that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil. Isa. 56.2.

Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the Lord Lev. 26.2.

Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing; Is it lawful on the Sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it? Luke 6.9.

And he said unto them, The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Mark 2.27.

And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made;

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and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made. Gen. 2.2, 3.

This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. Psa. 118.24.

One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. Rom. 14.5, 6.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

John Wesley's mother once wrote to him when he was in college, "Would you judge of the unlawfulness of pleasure, take this rule: 'Whatever weakens your reason, impairs the tenderness of your conscience, obscures your sense of God, or takes off the relish of spiritual things—whatever increases the authority of your body over your mind—that thing, to you, is sin.'"

If you will commit this rule to memory, and apply it, as a test, to any question that may arise in regard to the "lawfulness" of any Sunday recreation, you will have no difficulty in deciding.

THE LESSON SUMMARY

During harvest season in early summer, Jesus and His disciples went on the Sabbath through fields of grain. When the watching Pharisees saw the disciples pluck and eat the grain, they called Jesus to account, for, they said, it is not lawful to do this on the Sabbath day. Jesus replied by referring them to two examples from the Scriptures, that of David, who ate the shewbread which only priests could lawfully eat, and that of the priests, who performed labor on the Sabbath. These examples illustrate the true way to interpret the law in regard to the Sabbath. The Pharisees made minute rules to be followed; Jesus gave principles, not rules, and "the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath day."

Going into the synagogue, Jesus met a man with a withered hand, and again the Pharisees confronted Jesus with another question in regard to the Sabbath: Is it lawful to heal on this day? Asking them if they would not rescue a sheep fallen into a pit on the Sabbath, and saying, "How much, then, is a man better than a sheep," Jesus restored the withered hand. It is lawful to do well on the Sabbath day.

Let us live by the law of principles,

"Like the bard who freely sings,
In strictest bonds of rhyme and rule,
And finds in them, not bonds, but wings."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Is Sabbath desecration on the increase?
2. Sunday newspapers.
3. How is Sunday kept in our town? Have we a duty here?
4. "The natural result of turning the Sabbath into a day of pleasure will be to turn it later into a day of work."
5. The number of church services attended ought to be measured by the person's ability to enjoy them and get good from them, without being wearied: the home, that center of so great influence over the life and the character of people, ought to be made the scene of true Sabbath observance. *Dwight L. Moody.*
6. That is profound philosophy which counsels parents to make Sunday the happiest day of the week. And the chief requisite to this is that they give themselves to the children—at church as well as at home. The Sunday-school must not be allowed to usurp the place of the church service.

For very little children it is a pretty plan to set aside for Sunday use the most attractive toys, the favorite pictures and stories, the sweetest child songs and hymns, and to join with them more than ever in their plays and their quiet moods, until, when they awake Sunday morning, they shall exclaim, with a four-year-old of my acquaintance, 'Oh, I'm so glad it's Sunday!'" *Harper's Bazar.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. How does the narrative of the curing of the centurion's servant as narrated by Matthew (8.5-13) differ from Luke's account? (Matthew's account is shorter, and he writes as though the interview were personal between Jesus and the centurion. "He passes over the intermediaries, in accordance with the maxim that he who acts through another does it *per se.*") 2. Why was the centurion's faith so remarkable? 3. Compare the healing of the centurion's servant with that of the nobleman's son. (John 4.46-54.) 4. Compare the centurion's faith with that of Mary after the death of Lazarus. (John 11.32.) 5. Tell the story of the raising of the daughter of Jairus. (Luke 8.41-56.) 6. Tell the story of the raising of Lazarus. (John 11.7.) The story of the widow's son of Nain. (Luke 7.11-17.)

BETWEEN LESSON II AND LESSON III

No events are given between the Sermon on the Mount and the healing of the centurion's servant.

JESUS' POWER OVER DISEASE AND DEATH

Luke 7.1-17. (Read Matt. 8.1, 5-13.) Commit vv. 14, 15.
(May be used as an Easter Lesson.)

Golden Text

Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life. John 11.25.

Time: A. D. 28.
Place: Capernaum. Nain. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 30, 107-109, and 117.

LESSON TEXT. LUKE 7.1-17

1 Now when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, he entered into Capernaum.
2 And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to die.
3 And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant.
4 And when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom he should do this:
5 For he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue.
6 Then Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself: for I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof:
7 Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed.
8 For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth *it*.
9 When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.
10 And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick.
11 And it came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain; and many of his disciples went with him, and much people.
12 Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her.
13 And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.
14 And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare *him* stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.

15 And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother.

16 And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people.

17 And this rumour of him went forth throughout all Judea, and throughout all the region round about.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *All his sayings.* This refers to the discourses given in the Sermon on the Mount.

2. *A centurion.* An officer in the Roman army who commanded a century, a company of fifty to a hundred men. *Ready to die.* At the point of death.

3. *The elders of the Jews.* The Jews who managed the synagogue. *That he would come.* Perhaps the centurion made this request and then recalled it (v. 6), or perhaps he requested only that Jesus heal his servant, and his friends, the elders, added the request "that he would come."

4. *Instantly* is used in its older meaning, *pressingly,* from the Latin *instare,* to urge or press upon.

6. *I am not worthy . . . roof.* All Gentile houses were regarded by Jews as unclean. Merely to enter them was to become unclean. (John 18.28.)

16. *A great prophet,* like Elisha, who had wrought a similar miracle at Shunem, near by.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

3. *He sent unto him the elders of the Jews.* True advocates and skilful, were these elders. They made the centurion's cause their own, and when Jesus held back a little, as He often did, to test the intensity of the desire and the sincerity of the suppliant—"they besought Him earnestly," or, "kept on beseeching," as the tense of the verb would imply, crowning their entreaty with the plea, "He is worthy that Thou shouldst do this, for he loveth our nation, and himself built us our synagogue." Possibly they feared—putting a Hebrew construction upon His sympathies—that Jesus would demur, and perhaps refuse, because their client was a foreigner. They did not know, what we know so well, that the mercy of Jesus is as broad as it is deep, knowing no bonds where its waves of blessing are stayed. *Henry Burton.*

4. *He was worthy.* Observe in this account three estimates of the centurion's character: first, his own, *not worthy* because a Gentile and because a sinner; second, the Jewish estimate, *worthy* because he had built a Jewish synagogue, the highest encomium on character which a Jewish elder could pass on a Gentile outcast; third, Jesus' estimate,

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worthy because of his faith, and needing no commendation from Jewish elders, but himself an example and a rebuke to them. *Louis Baugher.*

5. *He hath built us a synagogue.* At Tell Hum, a hamlet of shepherds' huts, half buried among the underbrush, are the ruins of what was once an elaborate building, ninety feet long. The walls were of fine white marble, and it was adorned by a Greek portico, a colonnade, a noble cornice and finely wrought Corinthian pillars. The shapeless heap of ruins is supposed to have been the snyagogue built by the Roman centurion, and if so, it marks one of the most sacred places on earth, for in that building Jesus delivered the discourse reported in the sixth chapter of the Gospel of St. John, when His text was, "I am the Bread of Life." *William Eleroy Curtis.*

6. *Trouble not thyself.* What a beautiful humility is here! What an absence of assumption or of pride! Occupying an honored position, representing in his own person an empire which was world-wide, surrounded by troops of friends, and by all the comforts wealth could bring, accustomed to speak in imperative, if not in imperious ways, yet, as he turns toward Jesus, it is with a respectful, yea, a reverential demeanor. How strong the faith that could give to Jesus such an enthronement, that could clothe His word with such superhuman power! *Henry Burton.*

8. *For I also am a man set under authority.* A beautifully simple and straightforward conception of the authority of Jesus in God's world. As really as a Roman centurion was able to speak and act in the name of the Imperial power, so really was Christ able to speak and act in the name of God, the Creator and Sustainer of all things. As truly as the soldiers of the legion obeyed the command of their centurion, so truly would the powers of the universe answer to the Will and Power of Jesus. *T. H. Wright.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

5. *He hath built us a synagogue.* With the help given by recent excavations we can form a conception of the ancient synagogues. The synagogue is built of the stone of the country.

The inside plan is generally that of two double colonnades, which seem to have formed the body of the synagogue, the aisles east and west being probably used as passages. The flooring is formed of slabs of white limestone; the walls are solid, and well built of stones, rough in the exterior, but plastered in the interior. The synagogue is furnished with sufficient windows to admit light. The roof is flat.

Entering by the door at the southern end, and making the circuit to the north, we take our position in front of the women's gallery. At the southern end, facing north, is a movable "Ark," containing the sacred rolls of the Law and the Prophets. Steps generally led up to it. In front, hangs the curtain. The Holy Lamp is never wanting, in imitation

of the undying Light in the Temple. Right before the Ark, and facing the people, are the seats of honor, for the rulers of the synagogue and the honorable. The place for him who leads the devotion of the people is also in front of the Ark, either elevated, or else, to mark humility, lowered. In the middle of the synagogue is the *Bima,* or elevation, on which there is the desk from which the Law is read. Those who are to read the Law will stand, while he who is to preach or deliver an address will sit. Beside them will be the *Methurgeman,* either to interpret, or to repeat aloud, what is said. *Edersheim, Life and Times of Jesus.*

The Sacred Books, of course, were in Hebrew, but in the time of Christ the common people no longer understood Hebrew, just as at the present day the Italians do not understand Latin, the ancient language of their country. Accordingly, although the Bible was read in Hebrew, it had to be translated into Aramaic, the language of the country, and then followed an explanation or an exhortation founded upon the passages which had been read. *James Stalker.*

"The synagogues were open every day for three services, but as those of the afternoon and evening were always joined, there were, in reality, only two. It was the duty of every godly Jew to go to each service, the males of the family might go to the synagogue in any way they chose, but the women went only by back streets, to avoid the gaze of men. All, alike, were required to greet no one, and to make no reverence, whoever passed, nor to loiter by the way, lest it should distract their minds from thinking upon God. . . . The influence of an institution in which the Law was read, throughout, every year, on the Sabbath, and, in part, twice each week, with extra readings on special high days; in which the Prophets and Psalms were constantly brought before the congregation, and in which multiplied prayers, always the same, impressed on the mind every emotion and thought of the national religion, in language often grand and solemn in the extreme — must have been great."

Women on their Way to the Synagogue

12. *There was a dead man carried out.* The Jews seldom kept their dead over night, owing to the warm climate and to the fact that the presence of a dead body in a house carried with it ceremonial defilement. Every one who came where the body lay was rendered "unclean" for a

week. "The bier was not covered; it was a simple plank, with a somewhat raised edge. The body was wrapped in folds of linen, and a napkin, or *sudarium,* was lightly laid over the face."

"Had it been in Judea," says Edersheim, "the hired mourners and musicians would have preceded the bier; in Galilee they followed." Their strident cries could be heard afar, for such wailing was considered a necessary accompaniment of every funeral.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Who can tell what a century is? We have a story to-day about a centurion, and you can see in this name the same word *century;* you know at once that it has some connection with the number one hundred. A centurion was an officer in the Roman army who had command of a hundred men. In our army we call such an officer a captain. The story shows what remarkable faith or trust this centurion had in Jesus.

Mr. Moody was once talking to a number of street boys, and trying to explain to them what faith meant. He had a beautiful book with him, and he held it out to one of the boys, saying, "This is yours if you take it." Most of the boys laughed, and thinking Mr. Moody was having sport with him, the boy refused to take the book. Mr. Moody repeated his offer to the other boys, and when one boy at last stepped forward and received it, the others asked if that boy was really going to keep it. "Of course, it is his book; I offered to give it to the one who would take it, and he has taken it," said Mr. Moody, and then he went on to show those boys that faith meant simply taking God at His word, and believing all that He has said.

For Older Pupils. Twice only are we told in the Gospels that Jesus marveled. The first time He was astonished at the wonderful belief of the centurion, as told in our lesson to-day; the second time He was astonished at the perverse unbelief of His own people of Nazareth. The centurion was a Gentile and from him little faith might have been expected, but he surprised Jesus by his implicit confidence in Him as a divine Imperator. The Nazarenes were Jews with whom Jesus had lived, and among whom He had wrought His wonderful works, and from them great faith might have been expected, but they surprised Jesus by their unbelief, by their thinking of Him as only the carpenter, and by their being "offended at him."

The revelation of the centurion's perfect faith brought to Jesus such a surprise and joy as is ours when we see a beautiful character develop in the debasing surroundings of a wretched drunkard's home; and the disclosure of the unbelief and contempt of the Nazarenes, brought to Him such disappointment and sorrow as we experience when we see a base criminal grow up in the helpful surroundings of a Christian home.

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. Great Faith

Why Jesus Marveled at the Faith of the Centurion. At Capernaum occurred the cure of the nobleman's son, narrated in the fourth chapter of John. Perhaps the knowledge of this miracle may explain the remarkable faith of the centurion. Jesus places his faith far above that of the Jews. What the Jews had not learned from their long line of prophets during the centuries of divine revelation, and from the life of Jesus Himself among them, the Gentile had grasped in all its fullness and force. The centurion's faith was great, not alone in its completeness, in the clearness of its insight into Christ's divinity and power, but also because of the slight opportunity he had had of knowing Christ, and because of the frankness and simplicity and humility with which he acted in accordance with his faith.

Great Faith and Little Faith. John Bunyan, in his inimitable *Pilgrim's Progress,* pictures many varieties of little faith. Besides "Little Faith" himself, there was "Ready-to-Halt," and "Feeble-mind," and "Fearing," and "Despondency," and "Much-afraid." He has given so many portraits of one family just because the family is so large, and some of them are to be met with almost everywhere; and though they all got into the Celestial City at the end, they suffered terribly by the way, from obstacles that a stronger faith would have easily overcome. "Great Faith" lives in the tropics, and has a perpetual summer; "Little Faith's" years are like Norwegian years—very short summers and very long winters; his harvests can hardly be reaped, the storms are wild, and his music is chiefly in the minor key. Surely *Little Faith* is not what might be expected from one who has so great a Lord! There is such an infinity of grace and power in Him, that He expects the heart that trusts Him at all to trust Him to the uttermost. *G. H. Knight.*

The Soldier's Faith in Napoleon. As Napoleon was one day reviewing his troops at Paris, he dropped the reins of the bridle and his spirited horse at once dashed off. A private soldier down the line sprang forward, seized the reins, and checked the horse. "Much obliged to you, Captain," was Napoleon's acknowledgment. Quickly the soldier asked, "Of what regiment, sire?" Napoleon, delighted with the quick faith, replied, "Of my guards." The soldier put down his musket and went at once to the officers' tent, there to await his installation as captain of the guard, which soon took place.

Faith Honors God. You can not dishonor a friend more than by refusing to trust him, can you? Distrust, suspicion, are an insult to friendship. A child can not dishonor a father more than by fearing him, being suspicious about him, doubting his love. Are we never guilty of insulting the Fatherhood of God? . . . Job hallowed God's name when, amid

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the wreck of all his earthly fortunes, he said: "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Paul hallowed God's name when, looking at the cross, he said, "All things work together for good to them that love God." Samuel Rutherford honored God's name when, writing from his prison in Aberdeen, he said, "I have nothing to say of my Lord's cross but much good." *J. D. Jones.*

II. Compassion

The Compassion of Jesus. "Jesus moved with compassion" is His enduring name; a name that explains His life, His teachings, and His death as well; it was out of compassion for the sinful that He came; it was out of compassion for the ignorant that He spoke; it was out of compassion for the sorrowful that He wept; it was out of compassion for the wayward that He rebuked; it was out of compassion for the sick that He healed; it was out of compassion for the lost that He died; and it is out of compassion for His weak and weary and tempted and discouraged brethren that He lives in Heaven "making intercession" still. *G. H. Knight.*

"Our Hearts beside Yours." The young son of the Indian agent in Oklahoma broke his leg, and after much suffering it was found necessary to amputate it above the knee in order to save his life. The Saddle-Mountain Mission Indians sent Colonel Randlett, the agent, this beautiful letter of sympathy, which was published in the *Chicago Tidings:*

"To-day we have learned that great sorrow has come to your life because your boy, whom you love very dearly, has had to suffer again. We are only poor Indians, and we can not help you any, but we all feel that we can tell you that we are sorry for you, and for him.

"When a big storm comes, our horses bunch together between the mountains, and stand with their heads down, trying to keep each other warm. A great storm of trouble has come to you, and to us, lately. Let us put our hearts together, and with our heads bowed down try to comfort each other, under the shadow of the mighty Rock, Jesus.

"We are poor Indians and can not help you any, but we can promise you that we will try to be good citizens, and not give you any trouble. . . . We put our hearts beside yours in your trouble, and pray that both you and your boy may meet us some day in the home Jesus is preparing for us all."

The Power of Sympathy. Who shall attempt to describe the indescribable, and tell the power of sympathy? You go to see your friend on whom some great sorrow has fallen. You sit beside him. You look into his eyes. You say a few broken and faltering words. And then you go away disheartened. How entirely you have failed to do for him that which you went to do, that which you would have given the world to do! How many times you have done this, and then how many

times you have been afterwards surprised to find that you really did help him with that silent visit! My dear friends, never let the seeming worthlessness of sympathy make you keep back that sympathy of which when men are suffering round you, your heart is full. Go and give it without asking yourself whether it is worth while to give it. It is too sacred a thing for you to tell what it is worth. God, from whence it comes, sends it through you to His needy child. *Phillips Brooks.*

III. Jesus Said Unto Her, I Am the Resurrection and the Life

The Miracle a Sign of Hope. The words of Christ to this young man are a clear and distinct proclamation that the man was then as much within the kingdom of the Son of Man—within the reach of His voice—as while his breath dwelt in his body, whilst his friends could look into his face, and he could smile upon them. It is not to the eye or the ear in us that Christ has spoken here. It is not the closing of the eye or the ear which will hinder Him from manifesting Himself to any human spirit. That spirit can understand Him, and respond to Him, at all times, and in all places. . . . We should close the eyes of those we have loved best on earth in sure and certain hope that He who is the Resurrection and Life is calling them not to die, but to arise out of death.

Frederick D. Maurice.

Alas for him who never sees
The stars shine through his cypress-trees;
Who, hopeless, lays his dead away,
Nor looks to see the breaking day
Across the mournful marbles play!
Who hath not learned, in hours of faith,
The truth to flesh and sense unknown,
That Life is ever lord of Death,
And Love can never lose its own! *Whittier.*

An Indian's Argument. "Why are you content?" an officer asked an Omaha chief. "Pain and old age are not good things." The aged chief was silent a while, and then said:—

"The bird that builds its nest on the tree near my wigwam in summer leaves it when winter is coming, and travels thousands of miles to the southward; but in the spring it will come back across mountains and rivers to that very same nest. How do such creatures know the way? They have no map, no guide. The Great Spirit puts something in their hearts to draw them back to their homes. And He has not forgotten to put something in each man's heart that draws him, draws him all his life long, up to his home. I am coming near to mine. Shall I not be glad?" *The Youth's Companion.*

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Another Resurrection Miracle is recorded by the *Youth's Companion.* A reckless boy ran away from a devoted father and mother, and after many years of vagabond life, gained great wealth in the early days of gold mining in the Klondike. Twenty years from the time he left his home, curiosity led him to return. He had heard nothing, meanwhile, of his parents. Thinking that they were probably dead, he went to the graveyard. Bending to read an inscription upon a stone, he found it was erected to the memory of his father. He noticed the date, 1884, the year that he had run away! The date cut the man to the heart. His mother had been left alone! But perhaps she, too, had followed soon. Upon a neighboring stone he read her name. "Died, 1902." "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." A third stone was near. There he read his own name. "Abijah Powers. Born 1876; died——. 'The only son of his mother, and she was a widow.'"

It was his own gravestone, set up by his mother when her hope of his return was dead. Out of the depth of his memory there flashed up the story of the widow of Nain, and the Gracious Presence which spoke the word of life to her dead son. How many times his mother must have read and reread the page, and how frequently she must have prayed that her boy, bone of her bone and flesh of her flesh, might be given back to her arms!

The thought was anguish to the graceless son, and it brought him to his knees beside his own empty grave. With his hand resting over his mother's headstone, he wept as he had not wept since he was a child. They were gracious drops. Out of the mother's love, which had found its cold comfort in the words of Scripture for the grave that was no grave, there came, indeed, the resurrection of the real, living soul.

The Comforting Promise. After the battle of Inkerman, in the Crimean War, some soldiers, gathering up the dead for burial and the wounded for the hospital, came upon the body of a young man who was lying with his head upon his arm as if asleep. As they picked him up they heard something tear, and, looking more closely, they saw an open Bible, upon which he had placed his bloody fingers; the congealed blood had carried with the finger a portion of the leaf. Scanning the leaf closely, one of them read aloud the words: "I am the resurrection and the life"; and with that text upon the finger of the dead Christian, they buried him. With his finger upon the promise that Christ was the Life, he passed from the land of the dying to the land of the living; from struggle to conquest; from fog into brightness; from death to eternal life. *A. C. Dixon.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

The day of death is the birthday of eternity. *Seneca.*

No race or nation will ever be great, or will long maintain greatness,

unless it hold fast to the faith in a living God, in a beneficent Providence, and in a personal immortality. *Senator Hoar.*

The seed dies into a new life, and so does man. *George Macdonald.*

The truest end of life is to know that life never ends. *William Penn.*

There is a boundary to the understanding, and when it is reached, faith is the continuation of reason. *William Adams.*

An Italian praises a woman, not by calling her beautiful or learned or virtuous, but by saying that she is *simpatico,* sympathetic.

A Roman soldier outstrips favored Israel in faith: perhaps at the Judgment Socrates will rise up, to condemn members of our Christian churches. *Baugher.*

The words "I am the resurrection and the life," have created the angel of hope that watches the sleep of the Christian dead, and makes it to the living, radiant with peace and immortality. *Fairbairn.*

The question is not, how much do I believe? but, how do I believe? *Phillips Brooks.*

He has won awa'. *Scottish Saying.*

It's a great thing, O my brethren, for a fellow just to lay
His hand upon your shoulder in a friendly sort o' way!
James Whitcomb Riley.

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle. 1 Cor. 15.9.

Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. Psa. 103.13.

Whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give thee. John 11.22.

The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy. Psa. 147.11.

Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee; O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee. Psa. 84.5, 12.

Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief. Mark 9.23, 24.

It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. Lam. 3.22.

If a man die, shall he live again? Job 14.14.

God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave; for he shall receive me. Psa. 49.15.

But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 1 Thess. 4.13, 14.

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A PERSONAL THOUGHT

The words of our Golden Text, "I am the resurrection and the life," were proved true on that first Easter Sabbath when Christ rose from the dead. His broken-hearted followers had been plunged into deepest gloom by His death upon the cross, but when from the grave the Conqueror of Death came forth, their hearts thrilled with joy.

In the early Christian Church Easter was the greatest festival of the Christian year. It was called *Dominica Gaudii,* the Joyful Sunday. "Christ is risen," was the salutation as Christian met Christian in the streets of Rome, and back came the joyful words, "He is risen, indeed!"

"For you—for me—for all that sleep;
For hearts that sing—for hearts that weep,
Christ is risen."

No other event is so important as this, and our hearts rejoice as to-day we celebrate His glorious resurrection, for we know that as He conquered death and arose from the grave, so may we rise and live with Him.

THE LESSON SUMMARY

"Jesus' Power over Disease and Death," is shown by two incidents that occurred near together in Christ's ministry. The first incident gives us a wonderful picture of a centurion's humility and genuine faith; the second, a touching picture of Christ's ready sympathy and miraculous power.

"Thou hast no need, Lord, to give Thyself any trouble about my request that my servant be healed," is the Roman centurion's message to Jesus. "I am not even worthy to come to Thee. Thou hast only to speak the word, where Thou art, and my servant is cured." Then from his own military experience he gives that graphic illustration of what it means both to obey and to be obeyed. No wonder that Jesus turned to the waiting crowd and said, "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." As some one has said, "The centurion was worthy by all fair human measurements; unworthy when measured against God's ideals for him; and made worthy again in God's sight by his faith."

The second incident occurred the day after, when Jesus and many disciples were on their way to the village of Nain. His sympathy for the sorrowing widowed mother, and His restoring her son to life again, bring to us three beautiful thoughts this Easter day:—that Christ is ever compassionate, that He is the resurrection and the life, and that because He lives, we shall live also.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. In verses 7 and 8 there is contained a remarkable philosophy of

authority and discipline. I am under authority, I obey; therefore I have authority, I command others to obey. The true philosophy of human government lies within that statement. The man who has a right to rule is the man who knows how to be ruled. The only man fit to issue orders is the man accustomed to obey orders. *G. Campbell Morgan.*

2. We may well lay to heart the lesson taught by the centurion's faith, for there are seeking souls away out in the darkness, and there are humble believers in many a mission state whose earnest search, and whose strong life-molding faith, might put the fossilized Christianity and overmastering worldliness of crowds of our so-called Christians at home to the blush. *Alexander Maclaren.*

3. There are many men who do not consider themselves Christians who are nearer the kingdom than they suppose. Stop and examine yourself a moment. You are like the centurion. You love our people; you helped to build the synagogue; you attend worship more regularly than he, probably you see the benefit of Christianity to the community, and you support it. Why? Why are you as much interested in the cause of Christ as you are? You are a practical business man. You are not accustomed to pay out money where you have no faith. Do you not, after all, have more faith than you think you have? Else why do you lay up treasure where your heart is not also? I do not say that every man who rents a seat in church is a Christian; I simply ask you to examine your own motives, and see whether you are nearer it than you think. *W. E. Barton.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. The woman that was a sinner, of our next lesson, is often wrongly called Mary Magdalene. Who was Mary Magdalene? (Luke 8). 2. What do we know about Christ's appearing first to her after His resurrection? (Matt. 27.56; 28.1; Mark 16.1; Luke 24.10; John 20.1.) 3. What does the word *criticize* mean? 4. Find a verse in the Bible that forbids our judging others. (Luke 6.37; Rom. 2.1; Matt. 7.1.) 5. What was the special mission of Jesus? (Matt. 9.10-13; 1 Tim. 1.15.)

BETWEEN LESSON III AND LESSON IV

From the castle of Machærus, where Herod had imprisoned him, John the Baptist sent two of his disciples to ask Jesus, "Art Thou He that should come, or do we look for another?" Jesus bade them tell John about the miracles and the preaching of the gospel to the poor. To the multitude, Jesus then gave His testimony concerning John. He told them that John was said to have had a devil, and the Son of Man was called a friend of publicans and sinners. He censured Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum because they repented not, and exhorted all to come to Him. (Matt. 11.2-30; Luke 7.18-35.)

JESUS, THE SINNER'S FRIEND

Luke 7.36-50. (Read Mark 2.1-17; Luke 6.18-35.) Commit v. 47.

Golden Text

**Thy faith hath saved thee;
go in peace. Luke 7.50.**

Time: Summer, A. D. 28.

Place: Probably Capernaum. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 31, 32, and 109.

LESSON TEXT. LUKE 7.36-50.

36 And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat.

37 And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that *Jesus* sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment,

38 And stood at his feet behind *him* weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe *them* with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed *them* with the ointment.

39 Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw *it*, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman *this is* that toucheth him: for she is a sinner.

40 And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on.

41 There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty.

42 And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?

43 Simon answered and said, I suppose that *he*, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.

44 And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped *them* with the hairs of her head.

45 Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet.

46 My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.

47 Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, *the same* loveth little.

48 And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.

49 And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also?

50 And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

36. *One of the Pharisees.* Named Simon. (verse 40.) *Eat with him.* The Greek word here used is for the morning meal, or breakfast. *Sat down to meat.* This phrase translates a single Greek verb, and means *reclined.*

37. *And when she knew . . . house. Since the time I came in,* v. 45, leads one to suppose that she came about the same time Jesus did. *An alabaster box.* A vase, or cruse, made of alabaster.

38. *Anointed with the ointment.* She had brought the ointment for this purpose; the other acts were done impulsively.

40. *Answering.* "Jesus heard the Pharisees thinking." *Augustine.*

41. *Five hundred pence,* seventy dollars. *Fifty pence,* seven dollars. The word *pence* is used to translate the Greek *denarion* for which there is no equivalent English word.

42. *Which of them will love him most?* The point of the parable is that it is not the amount of the debt but the estimate of the amount, which is the measure of the love and gratitude. "The way to love much is not to sin much, but to think much of sin." *Samuel Cox.*

45. *Thou gavest me no kiss.* A kiss was the customary mode of welcome between men.

47. *Wherefore* does not introduce the reason for the forgiveness of her sins, but rather the reason for Christ's saying to Simon that she was forgiven—in recognition of her exhibitions of love. *To whom little is forgiven.* To whom little need of forgiveness is felt.

50. *Go in peace.* A Hebrew form of blessing.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

37. *A woman in the city, who was a sinner.* Tradition has identified this woman with Mary Magdalene; but of this there is no proof whatever. The mention of Mary Magdalene's name in Chapter 8.12 as an entirely new person, is against the tradition. Yet art has supported tradition in fixing this stigma upon an afflicted woman, out of whom our Lord cast seven devils, and who was one of the most affectionate and favored of the early disciples. *International Commentary.*

39. *This man . . . toucheth him.* If we would be successful in raising the fallen, we must come into warm, loving, personal contact with them. In that historic story which had so much to do with awakening the conscience of this country to the sin of slavery, you remember that Miss Ophelia could do nothing with the little colored incorrigible so long as she shrank from her touch as from a toad. . . . Those who are the greatest elevators of their fellows are not the haughty Simons, who scowl upon the outcasts, but the loving disciples of Jesus, who go in among them, and try to understand them, and seek to show them tokens of affection. *Wm. M. Taylor.*

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43. *I suppose . . . forgave most.* Mark the refinement of Socratic wit with which he gets the "holier-than-thou" Pharisee committed to the sentiment he desires to exalt! *George W. Buckley.*

48. *He said unto her, thy sins are forgiven.* Penitence does not end when forgiveness is assured; and as she finds herself in the presence of Infinite Purity, what wonder that the heart's great deeps are broken up, and that the wild storm of conflicting emotions within should find relief in a rain of tears. Tears of penitence they doubtless were, bitter with the sorrow and the shame of years of guilt; but they were tears of gratitude and holy love as well, all suffused and brightened by the touch of mercy and the light of hope . . . Jesus Himself traces for us this affection to its source. He tells us—for the parable is all meaningless unless we recognize in the five hundred pence debtor the sinning woman—that her great love grows out of her great forgiveness, a past forgiveness, too, for Jesus speaks of the change as already accomplished: "Her sins, which were many, are (have been) forgiven." And here we touch an unwritten chapter of the Divine Life; for as the woman's love flows up around Jesus, casting its treasures at His feet, so the forgiveness must first have come from Jesus. *Henry Burton.*

50. *Go in peace.*

Cast off the grave-clothes of thy sin,
Rise from the dust thou liest in,
As Mary rose at Jesus' word,
Redeemed and white before her Lord!
Reclaim thy lost soul! In His name
Rise up, and break thy bond of shame.
Art weak? He's strong. Art fearful? Hear
The World's O'ercomer, "Be of cheer!"
What lips shall grudge when He approves?
Who dares to scorn the child He loves? *Whittier.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

37. *When she knew that Jesus sat at meat at the Pharisee's house.* In some points of domestic life, the Oriental maintains much greater privacy than we do; in others, where we avoid publicity, he courts it. An ordinary entertainment is a public affair. The gateway of the court, and the door or curtains of the guest-chamber, stand open. The animal which is to provide the staple of the repast, is killed and cooked in the open air. A long, low table, or more often merely the great wooden dishes, are placed along the center of the room, and low couches on either side, on which the guests, placed in order according to their rank, recline, leaning on their left elbow, with their feet turned away from the table. Every one, on coming in, takes off his sandals and leaves them at the

door, socks or stockings being unknown. Servants stand behind the couches, and placing a wide shallow basin on the ground, pour water over it on the feet of the guests. To omit this courtesy, would be to imply that the visitor was one of very inferior rank. We can easily understand what a luxury this is to a travel-stained guest, who has walked over the hot sand of a Syrian road in summer. Behind the servant the loungers of the village crowd in, nor are they thought obtrusive in so doing.

Besides omitting the water for the feet, Simon had given Jesus no kiss. To receive a guest at the present day without kissing him on either cheek as he enters, is a marked sign of contempt, or at least a claim to a much higher social position. *H. B. Tristram, Eastern Customs in Bible Lands.*

The writer of a *Narrative of a Mission to the Jews* in 1839, says: "At the Consul's house in Damietta there were seats all round the walls. Many came in and took their places on those side-seats, uninvited and yet unchallenged. They spoke to those at the table on business or the news of the day, and our host spoke freely to them."

Before sitting down to the table it was customary to wash the hands. This washing has always had a religious character in the East. The guests being seated, each one returned thanks separately in a low voice, after which they reclined, in oriental fashion, upon cushions and sofas. When all were settled, one of the guests gave thanks in a loud voice for all, and the rest said amen, or even repeated some of the words of the grace. The benediction pronounced at the beginning and end of the meal was prescribed by the Law. (Deut. 8.10.)

Washing Hands

The Jews were very fond of family meals, and invitations were frequent. When the meal was of a religious character, or when special honor was to be shown to any particular guest, an aromatic oil was poured on the head.

The meat was brought round cut into small pieces, and the other viands in separate dishes. The head of the family distributed the portions (1 Sam. 1.4), and each one put his share upon the round loaf before him, and ate with his fingers. One dish of sauce served for all, and each in turn dipped his bread into it. (Matt. 26.23.) There is no mention in the Bible of either forks or spoons. Knives are mentioned in the Bible in the book of Proverbs (23.2) and elsewhere. *Edmond Stapfer, Palestine in the Time of Christ.* Thin slices of bread which could be conveniently rolled up were also made use of in conveying the food to the mouth. The broth was served in a separate dish from the meat, and was used for moistening the bread. *Bissell, Biblical Antiquities.*

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THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. The enemies of Jesus called Him a "friend of sinners." They said this with much scorn, not knowing that they were saying a beautiful thing about Him. Jesus had great compassion for sinners, and He sat with them, and talked with them that He might do them good. In Luke's Life of Jesus, there is this story which shows how He came to be called a friend of sinners.

For Older Pupils. In the studio of the sculptor lie blocks of deserted marble. Out of one emerges a hand, another exhibits the outlines of a face. But for some reason the artist has forsaken them. It seems that as the chisel worked inward, it uncovered some crack or revealed a dark stain. Therefore the sculptor passed it by, preferring the flawless block of marble. Is the soul soiled by sin to be cast off by the divine Sculptor?

Journeying across the plains, travelers, looking through the car windows, behold the California trail. The old route is marked by human graves. But long ago men exchanged the ox-cart, the deep wagon ruts, and the wearisome journey, for palace-cars. Thus there are many paths of sin worn deep by pressure of human feet. Many would fain forsake them. But is there any divine power to cast up some divine highway? As if to fulfil man's deepest needs, Jesus Christ enters the earthly scene. *Newell Dwight Hillis.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. Judging Others

We Do not know Enough about Others to Judge Them. Christ especially warns us against forming those hard judgments of others, which of all men the "unco' guid" are most apt to form. Simon could hardly fail to see that his life had been outwardly purer than that of the woman who was a sinner; and, seeing this, he forthwith condemns her, and Christ for suffering her to touch Him. He could not see, he did not care to see, the penitence which was washing away the stains of guilt, the proffered love which was strengthening her for future obedience.

The Pharisee knew publicans to be extortionate; but had he heard the cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" and thought what that meant, even he could hardly have used "this publican" to point a pious boast. The Elder Brother knew that the Prodigal had fled from home and wasted his substance in riotous living; but he did not see that the man had come back all broken with remorse, yet all healed with humility and strong resolve to amend. It is our ignorance of men, our partial knowledge, the prejudice which will see only their offenses against Heaven and us, which lie at the bottom of most of our hard judgments. We know very

little of one another, and often not the best; yet we pronounce our hasty verdicts as though we had studied the whole case. *Samuel Cox.*

Criticize a "Fallen Word." The word *criticize* was formerly used simply in the sense of judging. The master artist criticized the work of the pupils by pointing out their excellences, commending this drawing and that coloring. Michael Angelo corrected faults by leaving a perfect sketch to condemn his pupil's imperfect sketch. Not thus have most critics labored. Praiseworthy things have been ignored, and blameworthy things have been held up to the light, till the word *criticize* itself has come to have only a bad meaning.

The Critic in the Home. There can scarcely be a more disagreeable, tiresome, and devitalizing companion than the person who sees something to object to in everything and everybody; who can pick out flaws and discover defects with an ingenuity and an alacrity that grows and becomes skilful by practice. . . .

Nothing is more depressing and enfeebling than to cherish a complaining spirit, or to dislike people and things; while to hate anything and anybody is positively exhausting. Love of people, love of life, love of work, love of common things, is the best, the only true inspiration of a happy and satisfying life. *The Interior.*

A Fable. A man was complaining of his neighbors. "I never saw such a wretched set of people," he said, "as are in this village. They are mean, selfish, greedy of gain, and careless of the needs of others. Worst of all, they are for ever speaking evil of one another."

"Is it really so?" asked an angel who happened to be walking with him.

"It is indeed!" said the man. "Why, only look at this fellow coming towards us! I know his face, though I can not tell you his name. See his little sharp, cruel eyes, darting here and there like a ferret's, and the lines of covetousness about his mouth! The very droop of his shoulders is mean and cringing, and he slinks along instead of walking."

"It is very clever of you to see all this," said the angel, "but there is one thing which you do not perceive."

"What is that?" asked the man.

"Why, that it is a looking-glass we are approaching," said the angel. *Laura E. Richards.*

LET SOMETHING GOOD BE SAID

When over the fair fame of friend or foe
The shadow of disgrace shall fall; instead
Of words of blame, or proof of thus and so,
Let something good be said.

Forget not that no fellow-being yet
May fall so low but love may lift his head:

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Even the cheek of shame with tears is wet,
If something good be said.

No generous heart may vainly turn aside
In ways of sympathy; no soul so dead
But may awaken strong and glorified
If something good be said.

And so I charge ye, by the thorny crown,
And by the cross on which the Saviour bled,
And by your own souls' hope of fair renown,
Let something good be said! *James Whitcomb Riley.*

II. There Is Good In All

The Infinite Worth of the Human Soul. This was the discovery of Jesus. He always saw the possibilities in every one, no matter how hardened or hopeless the exterior. No one was too low, too degraded, to be worth saving. He saw in Simon, the rough, swearing fisherman, the great strength of Peter, the rock. He saw in Matthew, the publican and outcast, the making of a noble apostle. He saw in this abandoned woman, a soul full of penitence, gratitude, and love.

"It is said that one of the most magnificent diamonds in Europe, which to-day blazes in a king's crown, once lay for months on a stall in a piazza at Rome labeled 'Rock-crystal, price one franc.' And it is thus that for ages the priceless jewel of the soul lay unheeded and despised of men. Before Christ came, men honored the rich, the great, and the wise as we honor them now; but man as man was of little or no account.

"One of the saddest sights in a great city is its hospital for incurables. Who can think but with a pang of pity and of pain of these—old men and little children joined in one sad fellowship—for whom the physician's skill has done its best and failed, for whom now nothing remains but to suffer and to die? But in the world's great hospital of ailing souls, where every day the Good Physician walks, there is no incurable ward. He lays His hand on the sick, and they are healed; He touches the eyes of the blind and they see; even souls that are dead through their trespasses and sins He restores to life. But never, never, does He turn away from any, saying, 'Thou art too far gone; there is nothing that I can do for thee.'" *George Jackson.*

Fighting Mary. She earned her name; that tells the story. She had acquired such a reputation as a battler with the gangs of the neighborhood that it seemed like putting a premium upon bad conduct, I suppose, to bid her to the Thanksgiving dinner; but better counsel prevailed, and she was allowed to come. And when she saw the little mince pie at her plate—a whole pie, the first and only one in her desolate life—her

whole childish soul went out to it. She caressed it tenderly, felt of it, sniffed its sweet fragrance, and, when every sense was satisfied except one, she crammed it, all warm and pulpy as it was, into her dress pocket. The boys saw it, and, encouraged by the presence of strangers, jeered a little; not very loudly, for they knew the penalty well; but she heard it and with one of the looks before which the "gang" had quailed before, she said just this: "For Mother." *Jacob A. Riis.*

The Eternal Goodness. A young woman in a Reformatory Prison of Massachusetts seemed beyond control. The faithful superintendent tried in vain to gain her good will. One evening she gave her a book of Whittier's poems and asked her to learn this stanza from *The Eternal Goodness* —

"Yet in the maddening maze of things,
And tossed by storm and flood,
To one fixed trust my spirit clings,
I know that God is good!"

The next day the girl said the poem was so beautiful that she had learned it all. Before long she said to the superintendent, "When I wake in the night, and the old rage comes over me, and I want to smash windows and kill people, I say those verses and they quiet me and comfort me. They have saved me."

When the superintendent told Whittier the effect of his poem, he added another reason for the girl's transformation in his exclamation, "Thy heart must have been full of love for that poor girl!"

III. The Courtesies of Life

Jesus Noticed Discourtesies. Jesus did not regard even the courtesies of life as beneath His notice and encouragement. These foster respect between man and man, causing us to think of one another as personalities, not as things to be neglected or trampled upon. At this feast the host neglected to show Him the ordinary oriental courtesies. The man had no real regard for his Guest, but invited Him because he wished to gratify his curiosity by examining at leisure One who was the talk of the country. But he felt it to be a condescension, and he showed this by omitting the courtesies which he bestowed on the guests of his own standing. Jesus felt the slight; and, before leaving the table, He exposed Simon's little and loveless heart, enumerating one by one, in tones of scathing indignation, the courtesies he had grudged Him. *James Stalker, Imago Christi.*

Good Manners Need Expression. "What is the good of being gold if you look like brass?" Persons with gentle manners, though not noted for goodness, are often preferred to those who pride themselves on being good at heart, but disregard smooth manners and gentleness. It is, therefore, of the greatest importance to form early the habit of being gracious.

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It is impossible to cover up late in life an early deficiency in manner training. *Success.*

What is Courtesy? Courtesy is not something artificial. It springs from the heart. It is an expression of thoughtfulness for others. It is doing to them as we would be done by. At its foundation lie the great moral qualities of kindness and self-respect.

A want of that outward expression of character that we call manners may occasionally be due to ignorance; but in most cases it springs from pure selfishness. The rude person is so engrossed in himself and his own affairs that he forgets others, their interests, their prejudices, their likings. Thoughtlessness, laziness, selfishness, unkindness, conceit, ignorance—surely this is not a pleasing list of qualities; yet these are what the rude, impolite person reveals as inherent in his character.

Good manners, like any other accomplishment, are acquired by study, by observation, by imitation of the best models, by steady practice. The fine spirit of courtesy is caught largely from association with those whose ideals are noble. By study and care defects may be overcome and deficiencies corrected. Determination, a kindly spirit and a love of the right, will make politeness habitual. *William F. Shearer.*

Courtesy Pays. "If I could command the speech of twenty nations," said a president of a New York bank, "I would preach politeness to them all. It is the Aladdin's lamp of success. I do not speak idly in praise of politeness, for, out of the experience of fifty-six years in the banking business, it has been borne in upon me that courtesy is one of the prime factors in the building-up of every career."

Examples of Courtesy. A Chinaman was rudely pushed off the sidewalk by an American. Picking himself up from the mud into which he fell, and bowing politely to the American, he said in a mild voice, "You Christian, me heathen, alle samee, good-by." Could he have given a better reproof in a more courteous way?

George Washington was noted for his elegance of manners. He was also, always and everywhere, truly kind. Once an officer expressed surprise that the General returned in kind the courteous salutation of a negro, and Washington remarked, "I should be very sorry if I had not as good manners as that negro."

In the public and Sunday-schools of England, there are branches of an organization known as the Children's National Guild of Courtesy. Its aim is "to encourage a spirit of chivalry among children; to stimulate them to be courteous; and to promote habits of neatness and cleanliness and purity of action and speech." "Three of the bravest and greatest men who have ever lived—the Duke of Wellington, General Gordon, and General Washington—were distinguished for their courteous behaviour," the Guild declares. Are you not glad that one of the three model gentlemen singled out for the English youth to follow is an American?

SENTENCE SERMONS

Gratitude is life's sweetest pleasure. *Luther.*

Manners are the happy way of doing things. *Emerson.*

In the meanest mortal there lies something noble. *Carlyle.*

Courtesy is the hall-mark of a Christian gentleman. *George S. Williams.*

Life is not so short but there is always time enough for courtesy. *Emerson.*

Never does a man portray his own character more vividly than in his manner of portraying another. *Jean Paul Richter.*

The slightest sorrow for sin is sufficient if it produce amendment; the greatest is insufficient if it does not. *C. C. Colton.*

There is no dearth of charity in the world in giving, but there is comparatively little exercised in thinking and speaking. *Philip Sidney.*

"Judging of others, we can see too well
Their grievous fall, but not how grieved they fell;
Judging ourselves, we to our minds recall,
Not how we fell, but how we grieved to fall."

Amid those whom many would give up as beyond reach and unworthy of effort, I have found generosity, unselfishness, sympathy, patience, and cheerfulness that would often teach people in happier circumstances a striking lesson. *Maud Ballington Booth.*

Weary not in well doing: this means, weary not in courtesy, in civility, in doing well graciously—not roughly, bruskly. *Joseph Parker.*

It is good for us all to refrain from harsh and hasty judgment of our fellow men and to imitate what Francis of Assisi calls "the great Courtesy of God, who maketh His sun to shine and His rain to fall upon the just and upon the unjust." *Henry van Dyke.*

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Judge not, and ye shall not be judged; condemn not and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven. Luke 6.37.

But who art thou that judgest thy neighbor? Jas. 4.12.

Your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake. 1 John 2.12.

This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. 1 Tim. 1.15.

I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance. Luke 15.7.

What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? Psa. 116.12.

Charity shall cover the multitude of sins. 1 Peter 4.8.

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Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous. 1 Pet. 3.8.

Let your speech be always with grace. Col. 4.6.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Jean Beraud, a French artist, conceived the idea of presenting Christ as a living force to-day, by portraying Him in modern surroundings and among modern people. Christ only is dressed in oriental costume; the people about Him are in European dress, and represent the modern self-righteous Pharisees, the modern sinners and disciples.

In this picture of Simon's feast, the woman that was a sinner lies prostrate at the feet of Jesus, clad in a Paris gown. Simon, well-dressed, prosperous, worldly, self-satisfied, stands near by looking disdainfully down on the penitent figure. Grouped about the table are other guests, their faces indifferent, cynical, or mildly pitying.

These paintings do violence to our historical sense, but they vividly interpret Christ's teachings. They compel us to realize that Christ still lives, and His teachings are for us as well as for the people of Palestine, among whom He lived on earth.

THE LESSON SUMMARY

Two figures are brought distinctly before us in our lesson: Simon, wondering that Jesus should not be able to discern a woman that is a sinner, certain that if He be a prophet, He must have that power; the woman, thinking little of the difference which separates her from all respectable people, not afraid to approach Him who is most unlike her, casting herself before Him, washing His feet with her tears, and wiping them with the hair of her head. All of us know the picture well. And all know the story by which our Lord explained the coldness of the host and the fervent devotion of the sinner. A creditor has two debtors; one owes five hundred pence, the other fifteen. He forgives both. Which of them loves him most?

A light had burst in upon the woman's conscience, discovering to her an infinite evil. That same light had discovered an infinite goodness. She must escape from the one. She might escape to the other. She knew that she might.

The light had shone upon Simon also, but it had not penetrated far. It had shown him some little faults which might easily be corrected, which did not, in any serious sense, demand forgiveness. By various religious acts he might hope to avert the punishment of them. To cast them off—to cast off himself—he felt no necessity for that. And, therefore, according to the eternal law, each found what each sought. *Frederick Denison Maurice.*

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The Pharisees' opinion of Jesus. Jesus' opinion of the Pharisees.

2. There is a great difference between the way in which I am at liberty to deal with sin, and the way in which I must deal with the sinner, who falls into the sin. I may strike as hard as I please when denouncing the sin; but when the thing I am dealing with is a sensitive human heart, my stroke must have more than faithfulness in it. It must have tenderness as well. For any one who has fallen low, the way back to uprightness is steep enough. I need not, by hard reproaches, make it perpendicular. *G. H. Knight.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. What good deeds were done by Jesus one Sabbath in Capernaum? (Lesson for Feb. 18.) 2. What is a parable? 3. Tell in your own words the Parable of the Sower. (Mark 4.1-20.) 4. Tell the Parable of the Vine and the Branches. (John 15.1-8.) 5. What does the apostle say in verses 23-25 of the first chapter of James about doers and hearers of the word?

BETWEEN LESSON IV AND LESSON V

Upon a second preaching tour in Galilee, Jesus was accompanied by the disciples and certain women who "administered unto Him of their substance." He cured a man possessed of a devil, and the Pharisees said that He cast out devils "by Beelzebub, the prince of devils." Jesus knew their thoughts, and told them that blasphemy against the Son of Man shall be forgiven, but not blasphemy against the Holy Ghost: account shall be taken of idle words. He rebuked the Scribes and Pharisees who sought a "sign," or material proof of His Messiahship. His true kindred, He said, are those who do the will of His Father.

A Pharisee invited Jesus to his house, and murmured because He ate without washing His hands according to their religious custom. Jesus then pronounced His scathing woes against the Pharisees who "made clean the outside of the cup and platter, but their inward part is full of ravening and wickedness." To His disciples and the great multitude that gathered, Jesus spoke many things, warning them against hyprocrisy, fear, covetousness (which He illustrated by the parable of the rich man who built greater barns), and urging them to seek the kingdom of God, to give alms, to be ready for the coming of the Son of Man. When they told Him of the slaughter of certain Galileans, He warned them that "except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish," and gave them the parable of the barren fig tree. (Matt. 12.22–50; Mark 3.20–35; Luke 11.14–28; 8.19–21; 11.37–54; 12.1–59; 13.1–9.)

THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER

Mark 4.1-20. (Read Matt. 13.1-23; Luke 8.5-18.) Commit v. 20.

Golden Text

The seed is the word of God. Luke 8.11.

Time: Autumn, A. D. 28.

Place: Sea of Galilee, near Capernaum. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 33–35 and 104.

LESSON TEXT. MARK 4.1-20

1 And he began again to teach by the sea side: and there was gathered unto him a great multitude, so that he entered into a ship, and sat in the sea; and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land.

2 And he taught them many things by parables, and said unto them in his doctrine,

3 Hearken; Behold, there went out a sower to sow;

4 And it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up.

5 And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth:

6 But when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away.

7 And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit.

8 And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred.

9 And he said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

10 And when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parable.

11 And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all *these* things are done in parables:

12 That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and *their* sins should be forgiven them.

13 And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?

14 The sower soweth the word.

15 And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts.

16 And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness;
17 And have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.
18 And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word,
19 And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.
20 And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive *it,* and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *Again.* See 2.13; 3.7. *By the seaside.* The sea of Galilee.

4. *The wayside.* This means the hard-trodden path through the unenclosed fields.

5. *Stony ground.* This refers, not to the ground full of stones, but to shallow soil resting upon rock which here and there lies bare.

8. *Hundredfold.* The return of a hundred for one is not unheard of in the East, though always mentioned as something extraordinary; thus, it is said of Isaac, that he sowed and received in the same year a hundredfold, and the Lord blessed him. (Gen. 26.12.) *Trench.*

9. The parable ends as it began, with a solemn call to attention; the picture might easily be regarded as a pleasant picture and no more. *Swete.*

11. *The mystery of the kingdom.* The word *mystery* is used by us to refer to something not understandable. In the New Testament, it refers to something *once* not understood but now revealed. The mystery of the kingdom of Heaven had been revealed to the disciples, but was still hidden from *them that are without,* those without the circle of disciples.

11, 12. See Matt. 13.10–17, 34, 35. Jesus used the parable because it enabled Him to present truth in a veiled form. This permitted Him to teach in public in such a way as not to be misunderstood, and in private to explain His thoughts to His disciples. To have preached openly that He was the Christ, and to have endeavored to get everybody to join the kingdom would have been to invite misunderstanding and even revolution. He had to content himself in His own mission with the discovery of sympathetic, teachable persons with whom He could live intimately as a teacher and friend. Thus He could make them into evangelists of the truths He Himself was forced to veil. Jesus expected that some day these "hidden" truths would be revealed. It is a fact that a man will remember indefinitely a truth He does not understand if it is put in the form of a story. Some day, when he is ready for the truth, he sees it in the story he has remembered so long. The kingdom thus had its "mysteries" which could be shared and enjoyed only by its members. This mystery was probably Jesus' teaching as to the nature of the kingdom

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itself, and later as to His being the Christ. *Burton and Matthews, Life of Christ.*

13. *How then will ye know all parables.* It is as if our Lord meant to tell them that He hoped to see in them an ever-growing insight into the mystery of the kingdom cultivated by a long course of teaching in parables, and that this first one was so simple they might well understand it. *Lindsay.*

14. *The word* is emphatic. What the seed is in the natural world, the Word of God is in the spiritual world.

19. *Deceitfulness of riches.* It is not riches, but their deceitfulness which chokes the word; and riches can only be deceitful when they have been trusted in. *Lindsay.*

The lusts of other things. Literally, the desires concerning the rest of things.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

2. *He taught them many things in parables.* One third of all Christ's sayings are recorded in thirty parables. The teachings of our Lord, especially after the earliest phase of His ministry, were more habitually and essentially pictorial and illustrative than that of any other teacher of mankind. The word *parable*—derived from *paraballein*—"to place side by side" and so "to compare"—is used in the Gospels with a wider latitude than we ordinarily give to it. The parable differs from (1) a fable, because it only moves within the limits of possibility; from (2) an allegory, in not being throughout identical with the truth illustrated; from (3) a simile, in its more complete and dramatic development. . . . In ordinary English, the word *parable* is used to describe the illustrations which, while derived from nature or from human life, are used as pictorial figures of spiritual and moral truths. *F. W. Farrar.*

"Why does so small a flame in the engine's headlight," asked a student, "shed light so bright and far?"

"Because it stands," was the reply, "in the focus of a parabolic reflector."

A curved surface known as parabolic, is such that every ray of light is projected in lines alongside of each other. Light naturally scatters itself weakly in all directions alike. But in the parabolic mirror, it is all turned back and massed in parallel lines.

Parabolic teaching is a placing of the qualities of the to-be-known alongside the similar qualities of the already known. *Wilbur F. Steele.*

11. *The mystery of the kingdom of God.* The secret of the kingdom of God set forth in these parables is the fact of its only partial success in this early stage. This fact seemed to those outside, not possessed of the secret of the kingdom, to be inconsistent with its nature as a heavenly kingdom. They thought, when God really set out to establish His Kingdom, its success would be speedy and sure. Supernatural powers would

supersede natural processes, and everything would yield to them. The mystery, the hidden thing, set forth by Jesus in this group of parables is that the kingdom belongs to living, growing things, and is subject to the same laws as grain, leaven, mustard-seed, and the like. Gradualness, therefore, belongs to its nature. *Ezra P. Gould.*

15. *Satan cometh.* Many of us imagine that when we listen without benefit to the preaching of the gospel, no great harm has been done by us or to us, and we forget the solemn truth here taught by the Lord, that in such cases we have been actually under the influence of Satan. *Luther.*

16. *Receive it with gladness.* Their fault is not the mere fact of receiving the word with joy. For joy is a characteristic of deep as well as of shallow natures. Absence of joy in a religious life is a sign, not of depth, but of dullness. Joy without thought is a definition of the stony-ground hearer. *A. B. Bruce.*

17. *Have no root in themselves.* As the roots of a tree are out of sight, while yet from them it derives its firmness and stability, so upon the hidden life of the Christian, that life which is out of the sight of other men, his firmness and stability depend; and as it is through the hidden roots that the nourishment is drawn up to the stem and branches, and the leaf continues green, and the tree does not cease from bearing fruit, even so in that life which "is hid with Christ in God" lie the sources of the Christian's strength, and of his spiritual prosperity. *Trench.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

5. *Stony ground.* "A characteristic feature in the cornlands of Galilee, still to be noted by the traveler among the hills which slope down to the Lake."

7. *Among thorns.* Travelers tell us that in the hot valleys on the western side of the Sea of Galilee, where the soil is good, thorns and thistles grow rapidly and luxuriantly. No horse can break through their tangled brakes. The common oriental custom was to burn them down before sowing the seed; but the roots often remained. *Lindsay.* These thorns are not brier-bushes or bramble among which the seed falls, but an after-growth of a variety of thistles. The natural time for them to appear is after the wheat is ripened. *W. H. Thomson.*

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. The scene of our lesson is about the shore of the Sea of Galilee. There is a great throng of people along the shore, so great that Jesus with His disciples and others have entered a boat, and pushed a little way from the land. Like an amphitheatre before the Great Teacher stretches the beach with its throng of people, behind them the

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white houses of Capernaum, and beyond them the mountains. It may well be that upon one side of the mountain slope Jesus sees a man sowing seed, such a scene as Doctor Thomson has described in *The Land and the Book*. "Our horses are actually trampling down some seeds which have fallen by the wayside," he tells us, "and larks and sparrows are busy picking them up. That man, with his mattock, is digging about places where the rock is too near the surface for the plough; and much that is sown there will wither away, because it has no deepness of earth. And not a few seeds have fallen among the *bellan*, and will be effectually choked by this most tangled of thorn bushes. But a large portion, after all, falls into really good ground, and, four months hence, will exhibit every variety of crop, up to the richest and best."

Jesus begins to speak to the waiting multitude, and it seems as if He is actually describing the action of a sower before Him.

For Older Pupils. The adaptability of the Word of God for translation may find illustration in its parables. Were they drawn from unfamiliar objects and scenes, or did they demand a high grade of intellectual culture, they must either be impossible of transference, or, when transferred, unintelligible to the common folk. The times were primitive, when as yet the sciences were in their infancy, when there was little or no learning within common reach, and language must be adapted to the narrow mold of simple agricultural and pastoral life. Christ spoke to farmers, shepherds, and innkeepers. The land, where He lived and died, and where the people of God dwelt, was one of fixed habits and customs that survive, even yet, petrified into immobility. In no other land, like Egypt, Rome, or Greece, were similar conditions found, or at any subsequent period. Hence our Lord, like the prophets before Him, used language, and employed similes and metaphors, drawn from the commonplace, uniform, and universal experience of mankind. Everywhere there is something corresponding to food and drink, milk and honey, vines, trees, sheep and lambs, birds and beasts, hid treasures and pearls, fishing boats and nets. Wherever human beings are, there are the body and its members, the son and father, houses, tents or hovels, money or some medium of exchange, and clothing or some sort of raiment. The lilies and the thorns, mountains and clouds, hills and valleys, rivers and seas, flocks and herds, night and day, sun and stars—these demand no scientific botanist, geologist, zoölogist, meteorologist, astronomer or philosopher, to make them intelligible; and from such commonplace objects biblical illustrations and parables are drawn. Had Christ been a trained scientist, talking to the educated upon the mysteries of nature, such as modern discovery reveals, His teaching, however intelligible to His hearers, would have been utterances in a dead language when translated into the tongues of the cannibals of Polynesia, the Indians of North America, the Hottentots of Africa, or the aborigines of Australia. There is something here beyond the working of chance or accident. *Arthur T. Pierson.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. Wayside Hearers

Some Seed can not get in. The Reverend Mark Guy Pearse gives this interesting interpretation of the three kinds of soils and hearers. "The history of the seed lies in three little words: in—down—up. It must get in, or it can not get down. It must get down, or it can not get up. It must get up, or it can not get ripe. The failure of the first was, that it did not get in; it fell by the wayside and the fowls of the air devoured it. The second got in, but did not get down—it fell where there was no deepness of earth; it lived until the sun was up. The other fell among thorns. It got in, and it got down, but it did not get up; the weeds sprang up and choked it. It lived a long time but in the end it came to nothing."

Wayside Hearers of the Bible. The wayside hearer hears the word, but does not understand it, or—to use a phrase which expresses at once the literal and figurative truths—does not take it in. . . . For a type of this class we may take the man who interrupted Christ while preaching on one occasion, and said: "Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me." (Luke 12.13.) He had just heard Christ utter the words, "and when they bring you into the synagogues, and unto magistrates and powers," and these suggested to him the topic on which his thoughts were habitually fixed—his dispute with his brother about his patrimony. And so it happened to him, according to this parable. The truth he had heard did not get into his mind, hardened as it was like a beaten path by the constant passage through it of current thoughts about money. *A. B. Bruce, The Parabolic Teaching of Christ.*

How Hearts Become Hardened. A student who supported himself by working as a farm hand in summer time, constantly hurt his hands and made them bleed during the first week or so of work, but after that they became calloused, and by the end of the vacation they were hard and tough.

Hearts that are tender at first, become callous by hearing and failing to heed the word of God, and after a time so hardened that, like the ground by the wayside, no good seed can penetrate them and bear fruit. Refusal to hear, results in loss of power to hear.

William M. Taylor well says: "There are too many in all our congregations like Tennyson's 'Northern Farmer' of the old school, who said about the parson,

'And I always came to his church, before my Sally were dead,
And heard him a-bumming away like a buzzard-clock over my head;
And I never knew what he meant, but I thought he had something to say,
And I thought he said what he ought to have said, and I came away.'

. . . The hearer should seek to stir up his attention when he enters

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the place of worship, by pausing a little to ask himself why he is there, and to lift up his heart in prayer to God, for the open ear to hear, and the open heart to receive the message which his Lord has, in His providence, prepared for him."

II. Superficial Hearers

The Seed could not get down. One hears the word of God, and thinks it good. You see the sparkle in his eye, and the flush of resolution, "From to-day I mean to follow Christ." But it is mere emotion; the sneer of the friend at home, the mere dislike of confessing the Saviour, before the message is fully delivered, will have mastered him, and he will be as eager to pull the seed up out of the soil as he seemed to be to let it enter. *R. F. Horton.*

Cultivate Depth with Sincerity. The man of shallow nature makes a great show at first. He is all enthusiasm. He lacks depth of character, for he has nothing but rock beneath the surface. He seems to have much feeling, indeed, and his religion is all emotional; but, in reality, he has no proper feeling. It is all superficial. That which is only feeling, will not even be feeling long. For, as Robertson has profoundly remarked, "the superficial character is connected with the hard heart." . . . The shallow hearer enlisted only for the review, and not for the battle; and so, on the first alarm of war, he disappears from the ranks. He did not stop to consider all that the enlistment involved; he was allured by the uniform, and the gay accessories of military life; but, when it came to fighting, he deserted. Ah! but the Christian has to bear his cross; and he who understands what that means, when he takes his place among Christ's disciples, is a disciple until death. . . . See to it that you count the cost when you commit yourself to Christ. Be not content with mere sincerity, but cultivate depth along with it. Let intelligent conviction be the root of impulse; for unless it be so rooted, it will wither away. *Wm. M. Taylor, Parables.*

Shallow Natures. A type of this class may be found in the man who said unto Jesus, "Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest," and to whom Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." (Luke 9.58) The reply clearly implies that this would-be disciple was, under some sudden impulse, proposing to follow Christ, without considering what the step involved. He had received the word of the Kingdom with joy, and came to offer himself as a disciple in a spirit of romantic enthusiasm, without the smallest idea what he was undertaking, utterly unaware of the hardships of disciple life. *A. B. Bruce.*

Emotion is Deceptive. Let us never forget that however high, noble, divinely inspired, emotion may be, in its nature it is transient, and is sure to be followed by reaction. There is a close connection between a pre-

dominating emotional Christianity, and a very imperfect life. Feeling is apt to be a substitute for action. Is it not a very remarkable thing that the word "benevolence," which means "kindly feeling," has come to take on the meaning which rightly belongs to "beneficence," which means "kindly doing"? The emotional man blinds and hoodwinks himself, by thinking that his quick sensibilities and lofty enthusiasms and warmth of emotion are action, or as good as action. "Be thou warmed and filled," he says to his brother, and, in a lazy expansion of heart, forgets that he has never lifted a finger to help. *Alexander Maclaren.*

They Endure for a While. These *pro tem* believers are indigenous to every soil. There never is a great movement afloat—philanthropic, political, or spiritual—but numberless smaller craft are lifted up on its swell. For a moment they seem instinct with life, but having no propelling power in themselves, they drop behind, soon to be imbedded in the mire. "They endure for a while." And of how many are these words true! Verily we must not count our fruits from the blossoms of spring, nor must we reckon our harvest in that easy, hopeful way of multiplying each seed, or even each blade, by the hundredfold, for the blade may be only a short-lived blade and nothing more. *Henry Burton.*

III. Worldly Hearers

Ye Can not Serve two Masters. The man is, as James calls him, a "double-minded man." He is trying to grow both corn and thorns on the same soil. He has some religion, but not enough to make thorough work of it. He is endeavoring to ride on two horses at once. Religion says, "either—or"; he is trying, "both—and." *Alexander Maclaren.*

No man can love God with a heart for Him, and another heart for somebody or something else. See how fine seems the zeal of Naaman when he scoops up some loads of earth from the soil of Israel, that he may bear it over into Syria for an altar to Jehovah; and now see how he takes the whole worth out of it by the absurd proposition that, when his royal master walks in procession to the temple of Rimmon, he may be permitted to go as he always went, kneeling down to the idol with the rest of the heathen worshipers! *Charles S. Robinson.*

Good Seed and Thorns. Native servants in Australia take a yearly holiday, going off into the bush for a month or two to celebrate *corroborree,* and then return to work. The black fellows revert for a time to the state they were in before the "white fellows" appeared in the bush. Their clothes are joyfully abandoned and hid in some hole where they can find them when the spree is over. They arm themselves with bows and arrows, hunt the kangaroo and wallaby; and even revert so far as willingly to gorge themselves at times with dirt. When the holiday is over they resume their clothes, and some fine morning walk into their master's station and resume work. Doctor Jekyl and Mr. Hyde is a mar-

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velous portraiture of human nature, whether it be the duel between the flesh and the spirit of a Saint Paul, or an Australian "black fellow." *S. Davies Moore.*

O, the poor, weary, half-way Christians, who play upon the fringes of the religious life, and are never quite sure that they will not turn back again and leave it all behind! *Phillips Brooks.*

How to Regard the Things of this World. The Christian is a man in the world. The difference between him and a man of the world must be in the different ways in which they hold their worldly things. How easily, with what a sense of mastery, you hold what all the time you know you can do without. The beggar, the ruined man, the poor woman, with just one piece of money left, with no chance to get another if that is lost, clutches that piece of money tight, and, casting suspicious looks on every side, hurries along the street. The rich man, with his balance in the banks, holds his one coin lightly, and without anxiety parts with it with an easy grace for luxury or charity. That is the difference between the religious and the irreligious use of the world. The Christian works by your side in business or society, but do not think that business is to him the absorbing anxiety, or society the feverish race, that it is to you. He has not staked his everything upon their game. He can afford to lose, and yet go away calm and with the infiniteness of his life untouched. *Phillips Brooks.*

We can not know or enjoy or love the world too much, if God's will controls us. Has a mother anything but joy in watching the little daughter's devotion to her doll? Not until the child is so absorbed that she can not hear her mother's voice. Did any one ever love the world more than Jesus did? Yet was any one ever so loyal to the Father's will? Worldliness is not love of the world, but slavishness to it. *Maltbie D. Babcock.*

The Cares of the World. A man who lets all his longings go unchecked and outward after earthly good has none left toward Heaven. If you break up a river into a multitude of channels, and lead off much of it to irrigate many little gardens, there will be no force in its current, its bed will become dry, and it will never reach the great ocean, where it loses its individuality, and becomes part of a mightier whole. *Alexander Maclaren.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

If there is attention, there will be retention.

Attachment to God is the only secret of detachment from the world. *A. J. Gordon.*

Disregarded truth becomes disliked truth. *J. J. Given.*

The measure of our faith is the measure of our fruitfulness. *Henry Burton.*

Apply every known system of horticulture and hearticulture for the largest fold of result. *H. W. Warren.*

Men not spiritually awake are only bored by spiritual things. *R. F. Horton.*

The Bible, though he reads it, does not touch the wayside hearer so nearly as the newspaper or the ledger. *Samuel Cox.*

The gale that uproots the gourd, strengthens the cedar. *S. D. Boardman.*

The parable is a little drama, with its dénouement, a true fiction, but one that never transcends historic probability. *Edmond Stapfer.*

Let every time of hearing be followed by a time of meditation; that the seed that has fallen on the soil may, as it were, be "harrowed" into it by the process. *Wm. M. Taylor.*

It is the fruit of good works, and not the mere blossom of good thoughts and good feelings, which God requires. *Peter Young.*

Not the beginning should be inquired after in a Christian, but the end; to begin is the part of many, to arrive at the end, belongs to few. *Jerome.*

The chemist assembles the sweetness of an acre of crimson blossoms into a small vial of attar of roses, and Christ condenses innumerable theological systems into a few parables and pictures. *Hillis.*

We are made insensitive to the Gospels by the effect of innocent and necessary things, unless we take care to plow up the path along which they travel, and to keep our spirits susceptible by a distinct effort. *Maclaren.*

O, marvelous power of the divine seed, which overpowers the strong man armed, softens obdurate hearts, and changes into divine men those who were brutalized in sin, and removed to an indefinite distance from God. *Wycliffe.*

The Great Husbandman does not demand uniform fertility: He is glad to get a hundredfold, but He accepts sixty, and does not refuse thirty, only He arranges them in descending order, as if He would fain have the highest rate from all the plants, and, not without disappointment, gradually stretches His merciful allowance to take even the lowest. *Maclaren.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it. Luke 11.28.

Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. Heb. 2.1.

Rise up, ye women that are at ease; hear my voice, ye careless daughters; give ear unto my speech. Isa. 32.9.

And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit beside thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them; for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their

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covetousness. And lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument; for they hear thy words, but they do them not. Ezek. 33.31, 32.

He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him. Psa. 126.6.

I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Rev. 3.15, 16.

Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. Col. 3.2.

He that endureth to the end shall be saved. Matt. 10.22.

For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end. Heb. 3.14.

Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. Rev. 2.10.

No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God. Luke 9.62.

Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the Lord, till he come and rain righteousness upon you. Hos. 10.12.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

The seed is the word of God. How are you receiving it? Why should you be as the hardened ground, or as the rocky ground, or as the thorn-sown ground? Or why should you be as the ground that brings forth only thirtyfold? Why should you not be eager to bring forth *much* fruit?

"I gave thee of My seed to sow,
Bringest thou Me My hundredfold?"
Can I look up with face aglow,
And answer, "Father, here is gold?" *Lowell.*

THE LESSON SUMMARY

The parable of the sower pictures a common scene in the life of a farmer. It is easily remembered in its surface meaning—the sower sowing seed, some of it falling upon the wayside so hard that it can not enter, some upon ground so shallow that it soon withers, some upon earth so sown with thorns that it is choked, and some upon soil so good that it yields fruit in varying quantities. Upon the parable, in its meaning beneath the surface, we need to think often that its lessons be not lost. The seed is the word of God. Like the four kinds of soil are four kinds of hearers: those whose hearts are so hardened that they are indifferent to the messages of God; those who give the word a hearing, but whose interest is short-lived; those who hold forth the promise of bearing fruit,

but allow the thorns of other interests to choke their Christian life; and those who endure to the end, and bring forth fruit in lesser or greater degree.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. In proportion to the tendency of any system—such as the revivalist meetings of one school, the mission services of another—to cause excitement, are those results described in verses 16 and 17 likely to be frequent. *E. H. Plumptre.*

2. The soil may be improved; the wayside and the stony places and that which contained the thorns may come to be as the good ground. It is the work of every teacher to prepare the soil as well as sow the seed. In the words of an older prophet, which might almost seem to have suggested the parable itself, they are to "break up the fallow ground and sow not among thorns." *E. H. Plumptre.*

3. It is very curious how the world to-day illustrates what Jesus said on that occasion. Palestine, where He spoke the Word, was a downtrodden path, and the Word was snatched away from the beginning. Africa, eager and ardent, from Alexandria and Cyrene to Carthage and Hippo, received the Word with enthusiasm, and then affliction and persecution came, and it was destroyed. Europe took it—it was the salvation of Europe, and there is here no persecution nor affliction, no danger from without; but in Europe worldliness, riches, ambitions, the desires of this present life, choke it, and it brings forth little fruit. As yet there is no continent, no nation, as a whole, that has proved to be good soil. Only the scattered children of God here and there have received the seed into a good soil. *R. F. Horton.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Give the parable of the mustard seed. (Matt. 13.31, 32.) 2. The parable of the leaven. (Matt. 13.33.) 3. The parables of the treasure, the pearl, and the net. (Matt. 13.44-50.) 4. Relate two instances of forbearance told in Gen. 18.23-33, and in Luke 13.6-9. 5. On what occasion did James and John show a lack of forbearance? (Luke 9.51-56.) 6. Look up these Bible references which speak about the two future destinies: Matt. 25.46; Gal. 6.7, 8; 2 Cor. 5.10; Isa. 3.10, 11.

BETWEEN LESSON V AND LESSON VI

There are no intervening events. Between the parable and its explanation of Lesson V, are given the parables of the Mustard Seed and the Leaven, which illustrate the gradual growth of the kingdom of God from a small beginning to a great ending.

THE PARABLE OF THE TARES

Matt. 13.24-30, 36-43. (Read Matt. 13.31-35; 44.53; Mark 4.26-29) Commit v. 30.

Golden Text

Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. Gal. 6.7.

Time: Autumn, A. D. 28.

Place: Sea of Galilee, near Capernaum. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 36, 37, and 109.

LESSON TEXT. MATT 13.24–30, 36–43

24 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field:
25 But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.
26 But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.
27 So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?
28 He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?
29 But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.
30 Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.
36 Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field.
37 He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man;
38 The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked *one;*
39 The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels.
40 As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world.
41 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity,
42 And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.
43 Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

24. *Another parable.* After the explanation of the parable of the sower, which was probably given to the disciples while they sat in the boat, Jesus SU[illegible]ned again to the multitude on the shore and spoke to them this other [illegible]able.

25. *Tares.* Darnel.

me[illegible]29. *Lest ye root up also the wheat.* The roots of all would be inter-cit[illegible]ngled.

o[illegible]36. *Declare unto us the parable of the tares.* Evidently the disciples found this parable harder to understand than those given in verses 31-35.

38. *The children of the kingdom.* Not the nominal people of God, but those who had really "received the adoption of sons (Gal. 4.5) through Christ." *Schaeffer. Children of the wicked one.* Those who as closely resemble Satan and are as completely under his control, as is the case of children toward their father. *Broadus.*

29. *The harvest is the end of the world.* The time of the final judgment.

42. *Into a furnace of fire.* An image (derived from death by fire, Dan. 3.6) of the horrors attending the eternal punishment of the wicked. *Schaeffer. There shall be . . . teeth.* Christ departs from the image of consuming the tares to introduce another thought of horror, and heightens the terrible picture. The use of various images for future punishment should prevent a crude literalism. *Broadus.*

43. *Who hath . . . hear.* This prophecy respecting the destiny of all men, deserves the attention of all men. *Schaff.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

29. *Lest ye root up also the wheat with them.* Tennyson illustrates this by his fable about truth:

Once in a golden hour
I came to earth a seed,
Up there came a flower,
The people said, a weed.

To and fro they went
Through my garden-bower,
And muttering discontent
Cursed me and my flower.

Then it grew so tall
It wore a crown of light,
But thieves from o'er the wall
Stole the seed by night;

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Sow'd it far and wide
By every town and tower,
Till all the people cried,
"Splendid is the flower."

Read my little fable;
He that runs may read,
Most can raise the flower now
For all have got the seed.

30. *Let both grow together until the harvest.* The whole drift of the parable enjoins caution and charity. Brute force, persecution, whether civil (rooting out of the world) or ecclesiastical (rooting out of the church) finds little warrant here, and has generally resulted in actually tearing up the wheat. *Philip Schaff.*

38. *The good seed and the tares.* I often have a kind of waking dream. Up one road the image of a man decked and adorned as if for a triumph, carried up by rejoicing and exulting friends, who praise his goodness and achievements; and, on the other road, turned back to back to it, there is the very man himself, in sordid and squalid apparel, surrounded, not by friends, but by ministers of justice, and going on, while his friends are exulting, to his certain and perhaps awful judgment. *R. W. Church.*

41-43. Consider what this implied. It was a declaration that Jesus expected, and was willing, to take into His own hands the task of discriminating between the good and the bad in the unsearchable confusion and complexities of the human heart, and of determining, without hesitation, without misgiving, without redress, the final destinies of the untold myriads of men; " an office," it has been well said, "involving such spiritual insight, such discernment of the thoughts and intents of the heart of each one of the millions at His feet, such awful, unshared supremacy in the moral world, that the imagination recoils in sheer agony from the task of seriously contemplating the assumption of these duties by any created intelligence." *H. P. Liddon.*

To Him be the glory forever! We bear
To the Lord of the Harvest our wheat with the tare;
What we lack in our work, may He find in our will,
And winnow in mercy our good from the ill. *Whittier.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

25. *While men slept, the enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat.* See that lurking villain watching for the time when his neighbor shall plough his field: he carefully marks the period when the work has been finished, and goes in the night following, and casts in what the

natives call *pandinellu, i. e.,* pig-paddy. This being of rapid growth, springs up before the good seed, and scatters itself before the other can be reaped, so that the poor owner of the field will be years before he can get rid of the noisome weed. *Roberts, Oriental Illustrations.*

We are not without this form of malice nearer home. In Ireland, I have known an outgoing tenant, in spite at his eviction, to sow wild oats in the field which he was leaving. These, like the tares of the parable, germinating and seeding themselves before the crops in which they were entangled, it became next to impossible to extirpate. *Trench, Parables.*

26. *Then appeared the tares also.* As once I heard it remarked in that country, "The ears which God has blessed bow their heads, but those accursed tares stick theirs above the whole field!" For the tare then carries a tall light head of small dark grains, which in every respect contrasts with the weighty golden ear of the good seed. . . .

For the ultimate use of good seed for bread, all the hard grains must be carefully picked out, because they are poisonous. Flour of mixed wheat and tares can not be given even to animals. Hence all the baskets of wheat are carried from the threshing-floor to the flat roofs of the houses, where they are emptied out on mats, and the tedious separation of grain from grain is carried on, sometimes for days, until the wheat is finally rid of this unhappy admixture. . . . On one occasion, after an early start from a village in Mount Hermon, I felt a dizzy headache coming on which made me uncertain on my horse. My two Arab companions soon complained of the same trouble, till one of them said that he knew by experience what the matter was. "The women of the village where we got bread this morning were too lazy to get all the *zowan* (tares) out of the wheat. May their days be shortened!" *W. H. Thomson, Parables and Their Home.*

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. We can picture to ourselves the bare room of a small house, and can see upon the rug a group of men sitting in oriental fashion, their long mantles wrapped closely about them, their turbans upon their heads. It is Jesus surrounded by His disciples. The disciples are listening intently, treasuring in their memories every word that Jesus utters.

A little while before, by the side of the Sea of Galilee, Jesus had spoken a parable in the presence of a great crowd. He had compared the kingdom of Heaven to a man sowing good seed in his field. What did his enemy do during the night? What was the result when the fruit appeared? What did the servants say to the householder? What did they wish to do? Why did not the householder permit them to do this? In the time of the harvest what will be done?

It is this parable of the good seed and the tares which Jesus is now ex-

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plaining to His disciples at their request. Side by side Jesus places the literal words of the story and their spiritual meaning. By the side of the "sower of the seed" He places the Son of Man, Himself. What does H place by the side of the field? Of the good seed? Of the tares? T enemy? The harvest? The reapers? The events at harvest time?

For Older Pupils. There is a special group of eight parables whi appears to have been spoken about the same period, and to have be designed to serve one object, viz., to exhibit, in simple pictures, the ou standing features of the kingdom of Heaven in its nature and progres and in its relations to diverse classes of men. One of these, the parable of the sower, apparently the first spoken, shows the different reception given to the word of the kingdom by various classes of hearers, and the varied issues in their life. Two—the parable of the tares and of the net cast into the sea—describe mixture of good and evil that should exist in the kingdom until the end, when the grand final separation would take place. Another pair of short parables—those of the treasure hid in a field and of the precious pearl—sets forth the incomparable importance of the kingdom, and of citizenship therein. Other two—the grain of mustard seed, and the leaven hid in three measures of meal—explain how the kingdom advances from small beginnings to a great ending. An eighth pair, found in Mark's gospel only, teaches that growth in the divine kingdom proceeds by stages, analogous to the blade, the ear, and the full corn in the ear, in the growth of grain. *A. B. Bruce, Parabolic Teaching.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. Forbearance

Why Wrong Must Sometimes Be Endured. Wherever you go, or in whatever sphere you may be called to labor, you will find that you will have patiently to put up, for a time, with things of which you can not, in the abstract, approve; lest, by trying hastily to mend them, you make them worse than ever. Moses, even as a lawgiver, suffered many things for the hardness of men's hearts. He did not approve of the practices which he found existing among the Hebrews in regard to marriage, blood-revenge, and the like; but so deeply rooted were these in the habits of the people, that any effort on his part to remove them at once and altogether, might have led to the repudiation of the law as a whole; so he was content with something short of the best, in order to obtain the better. . . .

The boy thought it was a good device, when, after being well pecked by the hen for seeking to find how many eggs were beneath her, he said, "Oh, I know how to get her out; I will burn her out." And he did so, but he burned the barn down with her. . . . So true it is, that, in the effort to root up the tares, the wheat also has been plucked with them. *Wm. M. Taylor.*

Unskilful reaping. Let both grow together until the harvest. Can any one fail to detect the profound wisdom of such advice? How much of our badness is the exaggeration of something in itself useful! You may subdue a bad temper by plucking out the temper altogether. Unskilful reaping has in the moral sphere done more harm than injudicious planting. Therefore we greatly esteem the method of Jesus. He demands nothing meanwhile aspiration. He invites men to come in their sins. Other masters command cleansing before we enter their temple. The Brahman demands caste; the Parsee demands it; the Jew himself demands it. But Jesus demands it not. *George Matheson.*

A child had been playing in the garden. The mother said, "What have you been doing, my child?" "Helping God, mother," was the quick reply. "And how have you been helping God?" "I saw a flower going to blossom and I blossomed it." That is a parable of much that we are doing to-day. We may get the blossom, but we may spoil the fruit. We are little men, and we are in a hurry. God is great, and He is in no hurry. If we are to work with the Eternal, we must needs learn patience; patience with others, and, what is harder still, patience with ourselves. *A. W. Robinson.*

II. Whatsoever a Man Soweth, That Shall He Also Reap

The Lesson of the Slave. His master bade Lukman, the fabulist, sow a field with barley. The slave sowed oats instead, and, when charged with disobedience, excused himself on the ground that he expected barley would grow from the oats, "just as his master was always sowing the seeds of sin and expecting to reap the rewards of virtue." Unfortunately this race of sowers is not extinct. But let us not be deceived, for in morals as in nature, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." *O. Eldridge.*

Retribution in this World. Walter Scott believes in moral retribution. He tells us of a youth who deftly split an arrow at the point where it fitted the bow-string, that when his brother, whom he hated, should bend his bow the arrow might split, and, rebounding, pass through his eye. Now it happened that the brother returned from the hunt without using his weapon. That night, alarmed at a commotion without, the youth seized his bow, and, chancing to strike on that very arrow, was himself slain by the stratagem that he had wickedly planned for his brother.

The new biography of Benedict Arnold tells us of the despair of the traitor's final days, the remorse that gnawed his heart, the agony that filled his life. Yet no arbitrary decree was imposed upon Arnold. He plotted the surrender of the interests committed to him as a general, planned the stratagem that ended in the capture and execution of Andre, and received thirty thousand dollars in gold for his treachery. Having

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gone over to the enemy, he placed himself at the head of a band of English troops and went forth to destroy the towns and villages of his boyhood and pillage the homes of his old friends. He sowed avarice and of avarice he reaped thirty thousand dollars. He sowed distrust America; he reaped distrust from the Englishmen who had bought honor. He sowed contempt for the colonists, and, dying, he reap contempt from his old friends, who counted his body carrion. For t harvests of the soul represent not arbitrary decrees, but the workings natural laws. If Ceres, the goddess of harvests, makes the sheaf to rea the seed, conscience, recalling man's career, ordains that like produces like. What a man soweth that shall he also reap, is the law of nature and of God. *Newell Dwight Hillis, The Investment of Influence.*

Retribution in the World to Come. We are like operators in a telegraph office, touching keys here which make impressions upon ribbons in a land beyond the sea, and when we get there we shall have to read what we have written here. How will you like it when the ribbon is taken out of the machine and spread before you, and you have to go over it syllable by syllable? It will be a feast or a day of sadness. *Alexander Maclaren.*

We shape ourselves the joy or fear
  Of which the coming life is made,
And fill our future's atmosphere
  With sunshine or with shade.

The tissue of the life to be
  We weave with colors all our own,
And in the field of destiny
  We reap as we have sown. *Whittier.*

III. The Harvest is the End of the World

This World and the Next. The world's idea is that our life here is a complete history with certain chapters—youth, when we dream; early manhood, when we strive; middle age, when we attain; old age, when we sit outside the door in the setting sun; then—well, we die, and then nobody knows, and the less you inquire about the mystery beyond the better. According to the Bible idea we sow the seed in a springtime often cold and wet, and then in the autumn time in the long eternity we shall reap the harvest.

In the one way of it we go a coasting voyage, and then, after putting in and out of ports with various sorts of cargoes, the vessel is broken up, and a few pieces of timber lying about in the way of our forgotten labors is all that remains; with the other way of it, the vessel is taking a trial trip and adjusting her compasses, and then, when everything is in

working order, she puts out into the gates of the west and disappears in the sunlight. *John Watson.*

Christ's Teaching about the Judgment. This idea of immortality runs through everything that Jesus says and does. Never for a moment does He speak to man as a creature of this present world. Never for a moment does He forget, or suffer us to forget, that our largest and most precious interests lie in the world to come. He would arouse our souls to perceive and contemplate the immense issues of life. The perils that beset us here through sin, are not brief and momentary dangers, possibilities of disgrace in the eyes of men, of suffering such limited pain as our bodies can endure in the disintegrating process of disease, of dying a temporal death, which, at the worst, can only cause us a few hours of anguish. A man might bear these things, and take the risk of this world's shame and sickness and death, for the sake of some darling sin. But the truth that flashes on us like lightning from the Word of Christ, is that the consequence of sin is the peril of losing an immortal spirit. "I will forewarn you," says He, "whom ye shall fear: fear him who after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, fear him." *Henry van Dyke.*

Do We Believe Christ's Warnings? What would men's lives be if they really felt and grasped the stupendous truth that there is a God; and that we shall all stand at the judgment seat?

"Oh! where is the sea?" the fishes cried,
As they swam the crystal waters through;
We've heard from of old, of the ocean's tide,
And we long to look on the waters blue.
The wise ones tell of an infinite sea:
Oh! who can tell us if such there be?"

Shall we be like those ignorant fishes? We are members of God's kingdom: in it we live, and move, and have our being; it lies around us in the atmosphere we breathe. Shall we ignore it? Our citizenship is in Heaven; shall we act as though earth were our sole habitation, and this life our be-all and end-all? *F. W. Farrar.*

The Time of the Judgment Day. Every judgment-coming of Christ is as the springing of a mine. There is a moment of deep suspense after the match has been applied to the fuse which is to fire the train. Men stand at a distance and hold their breath. There is nothing seen but a thin, small column of white smoke, rising fainter and fainter, till it seems to die away. Then men breathe again; and the inexperienced soldier would approach the place, thinking that the thing had been a failure. It is only faith in the experience of the commander, or the veterans, which keeps men from hurrying to the spot again, till just when expectation has died away, the low, deep thunder sends up the column of earth

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majestically to the heavens, and all that was on it comes crashing down again in its far circle, shattered and blackened with the blast.

It is so with the world. By God's word the world is doomed. The moment of suspense is past—the first centuries, in which men expected the convulsion to take place at once; for even the apostles were looking for it in their lifetime. We have fallen upon days of scepticism. There are no signs of ruin yet. We tread upon it like a solid thing fortified by its adamantine hills for ever. There is nothing against that but a few words in a printed book. But the world is mined: and the spark has fallen: and just at the moment when serenity is at its height, "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with a fervent heat," and the foot of the Avenger shall stand on the earth. *F. W. Robertson.*

What Will the Judgment Be? As Christ Himself interprets His own parable, the picture is half in the sunshine and half in the shadow. There is the wheat, and there are the tares. There is the gathering in, and there is the casting away. There is the storehouse, there is the furnace of fire. We know little of what God's garner means. Eye hath not seen; ear hath not heard. It means safety. It means purity and peace. It means the vision of His face. It means service, strong, glad, free, everlasting. What the furnace of fire means, we know even less. As we peer into the gloom three things seem sure. The first is this, that the longer a man perseveres in sin, the less likely he is, so far as we can see from our present standpoint, to escape from its toils. The second is this, that so long as sin endures, punishment must cling to it, and shall do so, as surely as God is God. And the third is, that evil can not always disguise itself as good nor mingle with the good to hinder it: in the moral fitness of things, the separation must come; like must go to like, and Christ gather His own to Himself. How can we help examining ourselves and asking ourselves whether our life is a thing of Christ's own planting, or something He will disown and condemn? *J. M. E. Ross.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Men are born to be serviceable to one another; therefore either reform the world, or bear with it. *Marcus Aurelius.*

We must never throw away a bushel of truth because it happens to contain a few grains of chaff. *Dean Stanley.*

Deeds are not done when they are done; they lead on to habits, to character, to destiny: O what shall the harvest be? *C. E. Eldridge.*

Every one is sowing, both by word and deed;
All mankind are growing, either wheat or weed;
Thoughtless ones are throwing any sort of seed;
Serious ones are seeking seed already sown;
Many eyes are weeping, now the crop is grown;
Think upon the reaping—each one reaps his own. *Selected.*

If we wish to stand in the autumn of life covered with all the glory of October, we must pay attention to planting time. *J. B. Whitford.*

It is notorious that many in the church can not be distinguished from avowed worldlings. *Tuttle.*

Sin committed can not be undone by sorrow or by promise of amendment: sowing demands the harvest. *Morgan.*

We can never crush out the conviction that there must be one place for Saint John, who was Jesus' friend, and another for Judas Iscariot, who was His betrayer. *John Watson.*

You might as well expect a perfect lily from a rotten bulb, or choice roses from a worthless slip, as to expect the consummate flower of spirituality from wrong-doing. *J. B. Whitford.*

We should call a man who could sit on a barrel of gunpowder smoking a pipe, a rather unbalanced sort of man; so is the man who lives in this world thoughtless of the next. *George R. Hewitt.*

"By their fruits ye shall know them," and the fruit of Confucianism is dead China; the fruit of Buddhism is the immense spiritual despair of India; and the fruit of Mohammedanism is barbarism. *W. J. Dawson.*

The heart of the matter is not the "how" nor the "where" nor the "when;" it is this—that Jesus Christ, because He is the Son of Man, is at once Judge and Standard of Judgment: sometime, somehow, somewhere, we are to see ourselves as we compare or contrast with Him. *J. M. E. Ross.*

The Judge of all the earth will do right: no human being will suffer more than he deserves, or more than his own conscience will recognize as just. *Charles Hodge.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Charity suffereth long, and is kind. 1 Cor. 13.4.

I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love. Eph. 4.1, 2.

The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. 2 Pet. 3.9.

Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb. Psa. 37.1, 2.

The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished. 2 Pet. 2.9.

For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works. Matt. 16.27.

Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor,

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and gather his wheat into his garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. Matt. 3.12.

It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment. Heb. 9.27.

The soul that sinneth, it shall die. Ezek. 18.20.

Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee unto judgment. Eccl. 11.9.

For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind. Hos. 8.7.

But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to smite his fellow-servant, and to eat and drink with the drunken; the Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Matt. 24.48-51.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Let us not judge one another any more. Whatever our stage in the divine progress may be, our main business is to grow, to bring our fruit to its ripe maturity, not to judge the neighboring stalks. *Samuel Cox.*

THE LESSON SUMMARY

A householder, his servants, and his enemy are the figures portrayed in this parable of the tares; good and bad seed are the means used; bundles of burning tares and a barnful of wheat are the result at harvest time. The meaning beneath the surface of the parable is not clear to the disciples and they request an explanation. When they thus learn that their Master is to fulfil the office of Judge of the World, must they not have gained a new and awe-inspiring thought about Him? When they learn that the enemy which sowed the tares is the devil, must they not have better understood why, though Christ was sowing the wheat, His work was progressing slowly? When they learn that forbearance is to be exercised toward the children of the wicked one, the tares, must they not have understood why Jesus, that very morning, had allowed Himself to be insulted, and though He had the power instantly to destroy His enemies, He had merely given them a solemn warning? When they learned the fate of the wicked, must not each one of them have asked himself solemnly, "Am I myself wheat or tares?"

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. False doctrine may sometimes be more easily got rid of, if it be re-

garded in silence, or with a few words of convincing exposure, than if it be signalized with assault: no man who had any regard for his field would carry a seeding thistle through every part of it, or give it a shake in every corner. *Marcus Dods.*

2. Angels, not men, are the reapers, that is, the judges. Here was the mistake of James and John, who, when angered by the inhospitality of the Samaritans to their Master, proposed, Elijah-like, to call down fire from Heaven and consume them. Here is the mistake of all those sons of the Kingdom, whether Donatists in Augustine's time or Puritans in Cromwell's, who insist that when the King said, "the field is the world," He did not mean what He said, but really meant, "the field is the church," and therefore cite this parable of the tares as their authority for ecclesiastical discipline and expulsion. *George Dana Boardman.*

3. Whilst we need emulate all the gentleness, all the love, and all the forbearance of our blessed Saviour, we would also breathe this prayer to Him and say: "With Thy gentleness, give me Thy greatness; and with Thy long-suffering, give me Thy holy impetuosity for the Father's glory; with all Thy meekness give me Thy boundless spirit of determined purpose!" *Archibald G. Brown.*

4. The fact that Jesus Christ is to be the Judge on "that day" implies this, that the decisive question for every one is his relation to Jesus Christ. *James Stalker.*

5. Christ tells us expressly that the Father hath committed all judgment to the Son, because He is the Son of Man, that is, not only because He is sympathetic and qualified to judge, but because He has come forth to seek and to save. He is not only fit to judge, He has the right to judge. *George Adamson.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Tell the story of the stilling of the tempest. (Mark 4.35-41.) 2. Review the miracle wrought on the man with the unclean spirit, studied in the lesson for February 18. 3. Relate the story of the demoniac of Gadara. 4. Describe the appearance of the demoniac as Christ landed on the shore, and again as Christ departed. 5. In what respects did this demoniac differ from a maniac?

BETWEEN LESSON VI AND LESSON VII

To escape the multitudes, Jesus and His disciples crossed the Lake to the other side. A great storm arose while Jesus was calmly sleeping. The disciples awoke him, crying, "Lord, save us! we perish." Jesus "rebuked the winds and sea, and there was a great calm." (Matt. 8.18-27; Mark 4.35-41: Luke 8.22-25; 9.57-62.)

A FIERCE DEMONIAC HEALED

Mark 5.1-20. (Read Matt. 8.28-34; Luke 8.26-39.) Commit v. 15.

Golden Text

Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee. Mark 5.19.

Time: Autumn, A. D. 28.
Place: Near Gadara. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 38, 39, 72, and 120.

LESSON TEXT. MARK 5.1–20

1 And they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes.
2 And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit,
3 Who had *his* dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains:
4 Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any *man* tame him.
5 And always night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones.
6 But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him,
7 And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, *thou* Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not.
8 For he said unto him, Come out of the man, *thou* unclean spirit.
9 And he asked him, What *is* thy name? And he answered, saying, My name *is* Legion: for we are many.
10 And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country.
11 Now there was there nigh unto the mountains a great herd of swine feeding.
12 And all the devils besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them.
13 And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand;) and were choked in the sea.
14 And they that fed the swine fled, and told *it* in the city, and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done.
15 And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid.

16 And they that saw *it* told them how it befell to him that was possessed with the devil, and *also* concerning the swine.
17. And they began to pray him to depart out of their coasts.
18 And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him.
19 Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.
20 And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all *men* did marvel.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *The country of the Gadarenes.* R. V. *Gerasenes.* Gadara, six miles southeast of the Sea of Galilee, was better known than Gerasa or Gergesa (now Khersa) on the lake where the event took place.

3. *Chains.* The Greek word does not necessarily mean metal chains, but is used for any kind of band put about hands or feet.

7. *What have I to do with thee?* Literally, what is there to me and thee? What have we in common? *Vincent.*

9. *My name is Legion, for we are many.* The double consciousness of the man is thus indicated. *Legion.* The Roman name for a body of soldiers numbering, when full, six thousand men. "Of course it is a rhetorical and exaggerated statement by the man, as if he said, 'I feel as if I were possessed by a thousand devils.'" *Gould.*

13. *Entered into the swine.* The facts in this case are the cure and the rush of the frightened swine. The traditional account connects them in such a way as to make Jesus responsible for one as well as the other. *Gould.*

14. *They.* The people of the city and country.

15. *Sitting clothed.* Luke 8.27.

19. *Tell them.* The "first missionary to the heathen" was so successful in his work that when Jesus returned, the people came in crowds to hear Him. (7.31-8.9.)

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

Dual Nature. Is not every man conscious of a strange duality, so that he seems two men? There is the self which is proud, envious, jealous—a lower self. There is the self which is modest, generous, ungrudging—a higher self. Just as the lower self is repressed, the higher lives; just as the lower is pampered, the higher dies. We are conscious of this conflict, and desire that the evil self be crushed, mortified, killed; that the better be liberated, fed, developed.

It goes without saying that the victory of the evil self would be destruction, that the victory of the better self would be salvation. *John Watson.*

9. *What is thy name?* The man had a name once, an individuality of

his own. But now, whatever power of self-determination and control he once possessed, he has lost it. An alien power has taken possession, absorbing the powers of his life. Jesus first of all wants to call back that sense of individuality and responsibility. He desires that the man shall realize the nature of the power holding him in thrall, and he labors to call out the will and power of the man himself against that awful mastery. By the efficient coöperation of the man himself, he would break up that terrible sympathy and alliance. "What is thy name?" *T. H. Wright.*

13. *They were about two thousand.* We are not to suppose for a moment by this that there were so many evil spirits. All flocks of animals of every kind have leaders, and it would be quite sufficient to strike a panic into the whole herd, if they saw a very few rush down the steep *M. F. Sadler.*

"Take your stand," Doctor Thomson writes, "a little to the south of this Chersa. A great herd of swine, we will suppose, is feeding on the mountain that towers above it. They are seized with a sudden panic—rush madly down the almost perpendicular declivity—those behind tumbling over, and thrusting forward those before; and as there is neither time nor space to recover on this narrow shelf between the base and the lake, they are crowded headlong into the water and perish."

19. *Go home to thy friends.* When Jesus said this, it was all right. It was a kind of guarantee for his safety. It was the assurance that the grace which had made him whole could keep him whole, as well at home as anywhere else. *Mark Guy Pearse.*

This command, the exact opposite of the injunction of secrecy usually enforced by Jesus, is due to the fact that this was a region not frequented by Him, and in which, therefore, the ordinary reasons for such silence were inoperative. His enemies were not here, nor His injudicious friends, nor the people to be blinded by His miracle to His more spiritual work. It was a region rarely visited by Him, and out of which He Himself had just been driven, where, therefore, the story told by this man would be the only message of glad-tidings brought to the people. *Ezra P. Gould.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

3. *No man could bind him.* Hospitals and asylums belong to modern times. Like all other countries in the time of Christ, Palestine had no home for the poor and afflicted. The means used to restrain this unfortunate man from doing harm to others were alike ineffectual and cruel. He had broken his fetters, he could not be "tamed," and he had been driven away from human habitations and forced to take up his abode among the tombs.

These tombs were caves that were either natural or hewn out of the rock. They were spacious, often supported by pillars, and had cells along

their sides for the reception of the dead. They were always outside the cities, and usually in lonely regions. They were considered unclean, because of their containing the bones of the dead. (Num. 19.11, 16.) Maniacs haunt such caves to-day.

Rock-cut Tombs

9. *My name is Legion.* Only by an image drawn from the reminiscences of his former life can he express his sense of his own condition. He had seen the serried ranks of the Roman legion, that fearful instrument of conquest, that sign of terror and fear to the conquered nations, and before which the Jews more especially quailed. Even such, at once one and many, cruel and inexorable, and strong, were the powers that were tyrannizing over him. *Trench, Miracles.*

11. *A great herd of swine.* The Jews were not allowed to eat swine's flesh. But Jews were not the only inhabitants of that district. It had been colonized, at least in part, by the Romans immediately after the conquest of Syria, some sixty years before Christ. Though the Jews were forbidden by the Law to eat this kind of food, yet they were not forbidden to breed swine for other uses, such as provisioning the Roman army. *E. A. Bickersteth.*

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Did you ever make plans for a day of pleasure and then have them spoiled by some one else? Did you ever begin to make a kite or a doll's dress, and then have your work interrupted by your mother who wished you to go to the store on an errand? Did you go gladly? In our lessons about Christ's life, let us always notice how He accepted the interruptions to His plans. When evening came after His talk in parables, Jesus was greatly in need of rest. He proposed to His disciples to enter the boat and cross the lake. Utterly wearied, He slept while a fierce storm raged. Then the disciples, in their fright, awoke Him, and He stilled the tempest by a word. Did He rebuke His disciples for disturbing His much-needed sleep? No, He only wondered at their lack of faith.

When they reached the opposite shore where He had hoped to escape the people, a man with an unclean spirit met Him. Forgetting His own needs, Jesus at once listened to the fierce cries of the demoniac.

Three months ago we had a lesson about a demoniac. Who will tell that story?

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For Older Pupils. Christ teaches that there is a force, an influence, a spirit in the world, which is altogether evil, and which is continually devising, seeking, and working sin. It is the unclean spirit rejoicing in the defilement of the house which it inhabits. It is the father of lies ready to beget falsehood in every listening mind. It is the enemy of souls sowing tares in the field every night. It is Satan longing to get possession of the soul that he may sift it as wheat.

Whether we take this teaching of Jesus literally or not, whether we believe that evil is embodied in demoniac personality or not, one thing is unquestionable. Jesus regarded evil as a positive, organic, ever active, malignant power, a Prince of this world, whose domain lies all around us on every side, the friend of sin and the foe of the soul. There is a conflict going on in the world. It is not a mere game. It is an elemental warfare between right and wrong. We are cast into the midst of this conflict. An unseen, mighty, skilful, relentless adversary is against us. And in every heart there is a traitor ready to betray the citadel into his hands. *Henry van Dyke.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. Interruptions

The Example of Jesus. Jesus was always ready to listen to any one who needed His help, no matter how it might interfere with His plans. You remember our lesson on "a Day of Miracles in Capernaum" (Feb. 18). While expounding the Scriptures in the synagogue, Jesus was rudely interrupted by a demoniac. He had planned a pleasant rest, at Peter's home, together with the four disciples, but the plan was interferred with by the sickness of Peter's wife's mother. He needed rest that Sabbath evening, but clamorous strangers came to make demands upon His time and sympathy. In the following lesson we saw Jesus "preaching the word" to a great crowd, when suddenly the palsied man was let down through the roof of the house, and He did not deem this an interruption but an opportunity.

After giving His parables by the seaside, Jesus was wearied, and in the evening He proposed to His disciples to go to the other side of the sea for rest. Then came the night of the great storm. No sooner had Jesus landed than immediately the man with an unclean spirit met Him. Thus it happens again and again in Christ's life, that these interruptions to His plans, these little vexations that so few can endure, never once disturb His spirit.

"If you will put a character to the severest of all tests," says Horace Bushnell, "see whether it can bear without faltering, the little common ills and hindrances of life. Many a man will go to his martyrdom with a spirit of firmness and heroic composure, whom a little weariness or

nervous exhaustion, some silly prejudice, or capricious opposition, would, for the moment, throw into a fit of vexation, or ill-nature. Great occasions rally great principles, and brace the mind to a lofty bearing, a bearing that is even above itself. But trials that make no occasion at all, leave it to show the goodness and beauty it has in its own disposition, and here precisely is the superhuman glory of Christ as a character, that He is just as perfect, exhibits just as great a spirit, in little trials as in great ones."

What is Gained by Interruptions. My time was full to overflowing, and I wanted to carry out my plans, but a needy visitor came and I gave my time to him. The result was that I did nothing of what seemed absolutely necessary.

But what did I gain from that gift of my time? I gained a little more patience. I gained a little more willingness to wait for what I want for myself. I escaped the peril of withholding a gift I should give. I won a stronger belief in the value of self-giving. I gained more faith that God can use my time better than I can. I gained a fresh proof that there is more sweetness and peace and love in self-denial than in selfishness. *Von Ogden Vogt.*

The Organist's Lesson. An old organist sat playing at his organ in a great cathedral long ago. He loved his instrument, and his heart was in his music. Suddenly, he felt a hand upon his shoulder and heard the words, "Won't you let me try the organ?" Not liking to be interrupted in his music, he answered ungraciously, "I can not let a stranger play on my organ." "Suffer me a moment," urged the stranger. "I won't harm it." Reluctantly the organist relinquished his seat, but the moment the other began to sweep the keys, he stood as one transfixed. Such music he had never heard before. "Who are you?" he exclaimed. Smiling kindly the stranger replied, "My name is Mendelssohn." "Oh," thought the old man, "I didn't want my feeble playing interrupted, and I almost prevented Mendelssohn from playing on my organ!"

Would-be Heroes. You picture to yourself the beauty of bravery and steadfastness. You let the imagination wander in delight over the memory of martyrs who have died for truth. And then some little, wretched, disagreeable duty comes, which is your martyrdom, the lamp of your oil; and if you will not do it, how your oil is spilt! How flat and thin and unilluminated your sentiment about the martyrs runs out over your self-indulgent life! *Phillips Brooks.*

II. Self-Dominion

We Must be Masters of Ourselves. There is a lesson for us all in this demon-possessed soul, that we must be complete masters of ourselves, must allow no demon of sin to enter in and take away our self-dominion and our self-respect. Doctor Spencer D. Meeser well says: "Self-respect

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is better than honor from others. After God's approval, the next highest thing is the approval of one's own self. Every man must for ever remember that he is always in the presence of himself. There is no law higher for our life than the law of one's own soul—save God's law, and that is not higher, it is only the more perfect rescript of the one law in our souls. Perfect moral self-respect, that's the law, that's the norm, that's God's will, that's the touch-stone; and he is a king who has become thus the master in all the reaches of the universe of his personality.

To be king in his own life is worth more to a man than to rule a city or govern a nation.

Never can anything seem so much worth trying for, living for, sacrificing for, as to be master in himself, in control of his own soul; and no loss of success, or happiness, or popularity, could mean so much as that he has lost his worth, his self-respect, his self-honor, his self-mastery."

"Win the battle o'er yourself,
And you will easily put the rest to rout.
It is a perfect victory,
This triumph over self.
The man who keeps himself in hand,—
Sense slave to reason,
Reason slave in all to Me—
He is the victor of himself, lord of the world."

Thomas à Kempis.

Set a Guard. "He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city broken down without walls," into which any roving Bedouin can break, and carry away, loot, and work his will. If we do not set a guard at the gates, and question the traveler that wants to come in, what his business is, and what is his right to enter, we shall be invaded by a host of very undesirable guests, and our lives will go all to pieces. Very many men who make failures morally, religiously, or even socially and commercially, do so because they have no command over themselves, and because they have not asked this question of each sly temptation that comes wheedling up to the gate of the soul, with whispering breath and secret suggestions—"What do you want here? What reason have you for wishing to come in?" *Alexander Maclaren.*

Be Loyal to the Royal in Yourself. That is a fine line of Tennyson's in his dedication of the "Idyls,"

"O loyal to the royal in thyself!"

There is a royal in every man, and disloyalty to it is the height of shame and pity. A prince may do a scullion's task, but he will do it in a princely way. Your blooded coach-horse may pull the scavenger's cart;

but, if he be in truth blooded, he will pull it with finely-arched neck and proud step. You may crush the diamond and grind it to dust, but every grain of the heap will be diamond dust, loyal to the royal in itself. . . .

As for sin, it is rebellious disloyalty to the King in Heaven, but it is disloyalty to the royal in the sinner. It is unworthy our sonship with God to sin, but it is also unworthy the manhood that is in us. Is it not a great tribute to Daniel that he "purposed in his heart that he would not defile *himself?*" *Cleland B. MacAfee.*

Near of Kin to God. Every child of God should remember that the very highest nobility belongs to him. He is very near of kin to God. He should be careful to do nothing unworthy of his nobility. A friend one day saw a young nobleman misbehaving at a railway station. An aged man went up to him and said, "You have forgotten that you are the representative of the noble house of ———" The youth was abashed, and ceased from sullying a noble name. "Tell no lie," Darius said to his son, "for you may one day be king."

We greatly need that self-reverence which scorns to do any deed of shame. Nobility obliges the noble to live nobly. When tempted to do any doubtful thing, you should ask yourself, "But is this worthy of one who wears the name of Christ?" All the sons of God should bear themselves right nobly. *James Wells.*

III. Go Home to Thy Friends, and Tell Them how Great Things the Lord hath Done for Thee

Go Home and Tell thy Friends. How much there is in these simple words of our Lord! What thoughts they ought to stir up in the hearts of all true Christians! "Go home and tell thy friends." Home is the place, above all others, where the child of God ought to make his first endeavors to do good. Home is the place where he should strive daily to witness for Christ. Home is the place where he was daily doing harm by his example so long as he served the world. Home is the place where he is especially bound to be a living epistle of Christ, so soon as he has been mercifully taught to serve God. May we all remember these things daily! May it never be said of us that we are saints abroad, but wicked by our own fireside—talkers about religion abroad, but worldly and ungodly at home! *J. C. Ryle.*

Our Duty. "You speak of those who taught you to paint, to sing, to write, to speak," says Joseph Parker, "do you ever mention His name who loved you and gave Himself for you?"

Why do we hesitate to bear our witness for Christ? If we could but know it, that unchristian friend who is apparently so gay and careless and thoughtless, is at heart dissatisfied and restless, and wishes that you, who know the joy of something better and higher, would tell her about your experience. But you fear to speak, fear that your words would

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only meet with coldness or indifference, and you let your golden opportunity pass.

A great life insurance company in New York once invited its agents throughout the country to a business conference in New York. While there, one of these agents from the West insured the barber, the elevator man, and a waiter in the restaurant, all of whom had been employed for years by the insurance company in its great building. No one had thought to offer policies to those men.

Are we not like that great insurance company? Are there not members of our own household, of our own circle of friends, of our own Sunday-school and church, who may rightly expect us to have a personal interest in them?

Doctor Trumbull quotes these words of a prominent clergyman about a well-known evangelist: "I was his fellow-student in college, and this I can say of him. In all the four years of his college course, no student could be six weeks there without having to meet squarely the question of his personal relation to Christ, through the loving and earnest personal appeal of that follower of Christ. I was a skeptic when I entered college, yet I had little thought on the subject of religion anyway. But that man's appeals I had to meet, and I would not resist. It is in consequence of his faithfulness that my life is in the Christian ministry."

The Farmer's Testimony. *The Youth's Companion* gives an unusual conversation on a railroad train. A farmer entered the car with a basket of vegetables, and seeing an old man whom he knew, sat down to visit with him. Their conversation interested all around.

"I've had many troubles to carry, John," at length the old man said. "I know," returned John tenderly, "I know. I reckon we all have worries enough to pull us down in this world, if it wasn't for the hope given us by our Friend who has gone on before."

"Who is that?" sharply asked a boy who had been drinking.

"Why, my dear boy, don't you know? Jesus is the one Friend above all others," answered the farmer simply.

When the farmer rose to leave soon after, his aged friend said,

"Good-by, John, I may never see you again. I'm going down hill pretty fast. But I'm glad we met, and"—his voice sinking—"I'm glad you spoke of Jesus."

Silence Brings Loss. Making all allowances for conventional reticence and insular reserve and personal idiosyncrasies and the like, I do believe that many of us lose a great deal of strength and blessedness of our religion because we are so dumb about it. If we never acknowledge whose we are, we shall run a dreadful risk of losing much of the religion which we are so slow, so ashamed, so afraid to confess. If you would believe, speak. "I believe, therefore I have spoken" is true; and you can turn it round the other way; I speak, therefore I have believed. *Alexander Maclaren.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Live Jesus, and when advisable, preach Jesus. *Maclaren.*

He is most powerful who has himself in his power. *Seneca.*

If "know thyself" is the counsel of wisdom, "Rule thyself" is the command of righteousness. *Moxom.*

A man without self-restraint is like a barrel without hoops, and tumbles to pieces. *Beecher.*

If you have enlisted for Christ as your Redeemer and your Master, then always and everywhere show your colors. *Cuyler.*

We clear and deepen our faith in the very act of speaking it: to speak blows away, as it were, the haze that gathers round our thoughts when they are only thoughts. *Maclaren.*

If you would keep a spiritual blessing, pass it on: if you shut it in a selfish heart, it will spoil. *D. M. Stearns.*

The devils seem to accuse Christ of injustice in expelling them; the world often complains that religion exacts more of man than is reasonable and just. *Luther.*

If you want your neighbor to know what the Christ spirit will do for him, let him see what it has done for you. *Beecher.*

No doubt life is a better witness than words, but no doubt also life is not so good a witness as it might be, unless it sometimes has the commentary of words as well. *Maclaren.*

A hot fire in a storm on these wintry days reports itself; and if the love of Jesus burns in your heart, other people around you will soon discover it: if, on the other hand, your intimate associates do not suppose or suspect that you are a Christian, then you may doubt if you are one, and ought to take a new start and seek a re-conversion. *Cuyler.*

> We rise by the things that are under foot,
> By what we have mastered of good and gain,
> By the pride deposed and the passion slain,
> And the vanquished ills that we hourly meet. *J. G. Holland.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

The devils also believe, and tremble. Jas. 2.19.

I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. 1 John 2.13.

To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God. Rev. 2.7.

Ye are our epistles written in our hearts; known and read of all men. 2 Cor. 3.2.

To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. Rev. 3.21.

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But if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. Rom. 10.9.

Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven. Matt. 10.32, 33.

Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul. Psa. 66.16.

I thought it good to show the signs and wonders that the high God hath wrought toward me. Dan. 4.2.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

How are you witnessing? Has the one who sits next you at school; the one who works at your elbow in the shop; the one by your side in the church pew; the one who sometimes climbs on your knee, or for whom you cover a ball, or bend a bow, heard of Christ through you? Have you made a list of the unsaved ones in your Sunday-school class, and prayed for them by name and spoken to them of Jesus? *John F. Cowan.*

THE LESSON SUMMARY

Very graphic is the picture of this man with an unclean spirit, who dwelt among the tombs, who plucked asunder all chains, and broke all fetters put upon him, who day and night was crying and cutting himself. One moment he falls down and worships Jesus; the next he cries out, "What have I to do with Thee, thou Son of the most high God?" Are not the two voices typical of two natures in a human being, the higher and the lower one? "The product of the two voices (or the two natures) was unrest—fierce, tumultuous, maddening unrest."

Jesus was always compassionate. He commanded the demon to come forth, and it obeyed. Then followed the mad race of a great herd of swine. "The unearthly utterance of the demonized, the wild panic among the herd on the cliff, the mad rush down the steep, the splashing waters as the helpless animals were precipitated into the Lake—all this makes up a picture, unsurpassed for vivid, terrible realism," says Edersheim in his *Life of Christ.* "And now sudden silence has fallen on them. From above, the keepers of the herd had seen it all—alike what had passed with the demonized, and then the issue in the destruction of the herd. From the first, as they saw the demonized, for fear of whom 'no man might pass that way,' running to Jesus, they must have watched with eager interest. In the clear Eastern air not a word that was spoken could have been lost. And now in the wild terror they fled, into Gerasa—into the country round about, to tell what had happened."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Men under bondage to evil.

2. The method of Jesus in dealing with these disordered natures is surely most inspiring to modern Christianity and philanthrophy. These striking examples of divine power may well have been given to show us what may be yet accomplished in the restoration of the mentally afflicted. One of the romances of our day is found in the marvelous results already obtained in the education of idiots and imbeciles. The method employed follows, in reality, the lines traversed by Jesus. The effort always is to get through all physical and psychical disabilities to the human soul. In dealing with the mentally deranged also, the method now widely adopted is essentially the same. *T. H. Wright.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Review what you learned about Herod in the lesson for January 14, and what you learned about John the Baptist in the lesson for January 28. 2. Tell the story of Herod's feast. (Mark 6.21–28.) 3. Tell the story of Belshazzar's feast narrated in the fifth chapter of Daniel. 4. Read the story of Joseph and his brethren and their remorse, in the forty-second chapter of Genesis. 5. In the Subject-Index in the back of your Bible, under the heading *John, the Baptist,* you will find all the Bible references to John given. From them write out John's career in your own words. 6. Write a characterization of John, of Herod, of Herodias, of Salome. 7. Contrast Herod and John. 8. What one of the Beatitudes is especially applicable to John?

BETWEEN LESSON VII AND LESSON VIII

After Jesus called Matthew the publican to be His disciple, He became a guest in Matthew's house. The Pharisees murmured because He ate with publicans and sinners; Jesus told them that He had come "not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." He defended His disciples for not fasting, and foretold the time when He should no longer be with them. He wrought several miracles, raising from the dead the daughter of Jairus, curing the disease of a woman who touched Him in the crowd, restoring the sight of two blind men, and healing a dumb demoniac. At Nazareth He was again rejected, for the people would recognize Him only as the "carpenter's son." The Third Preaching Tour in Galilee followed. He sent the twelve disciples on their first mission with power to work miracles. (Matt. 9.10-38; 13.54-58; Mark 2.15-22; 5.22-43; 6.1-13; Luke 5.29-39; 8.41-56; 9.1-6.)

DEATH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

Mark 6.14-29. (Read Matt. 14.1-12; Luke 5.1-20; 6.7-13.) Commit v. 20.

(May be used as a temperance lesson.)

Golden Text

Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess. Eph. 5.18.

Time: A. D. 29.

Place: Probably Castle of Machærus. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 40, 41, and 123.

LESSON TEXT. MARK 6.14–29

14 And King Herod heard *of him;* (for his name was spread abroad:) and he said, That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him.

15 Others said, That it is Elias. And others said, That it is a prophet, or as one of the prophets.

16 But when Herod heard *thereof,* he said, It is John, whom I beheaded: he is risen from the dead.

17 For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife: for he had married her.

18 For John had said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife.

19 Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him, and would have killed him; but she could not:

20 For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.

21 And when a convenient day was come, that Herod on his birthday made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief *estates* of Galilee;

22 And when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased Herod and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give *it* thee.

23 And he sware unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give *it* thee, unto the half of my kingdom.

24 And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist.

25 And she came in straightway with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me by and by in a charger the head of John the Baptist.

26 And the king was exceeding sorry; *yet* for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her.
27 And immediately the king sent an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought: and he went and beheaded him in the prison,
28 And brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel: and the damsel gave it to her mother.
29 And when his disciples heard *of it,* they came and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

14. *King Herod.* Herod the tetrarch. He may have been called king by courtesy. *Mighty works.* In life John did no miracles, but John risen from the dead, might well be supposed to have brought with him new and supernatural powers. *Swete.*

15. *Elias.* Elijah, whom by misinterpretation of Mal. 4.5 many persons expected to return. *Haas.*

17. Mark now turns back to narrate the death of John, which had happened some time ago. *In prison.* According to Josephus, this prison was the fortress of Machærus, on the east side of the Dead Sea.

19. *Had a quarrel.* Had a grudge, or spite against him. *Margin.*

20. *Observed him.* R. V., kept him safe, from the hostility of Herodias. *He did many things,* R. V., He was much perplexed.

21. *A convenient day.* Convenient for the purpose of Herodias.

22. *The daughter of the said Herodias.* R. V., The daughter of Herodias herself. The intensive pronoun is used here because such dancing was an almost unprecedented thing for women of rank, or even respectability. *Gould.* At this period, dancing, according to Cicero, who declared that it was a practice of drunkards or madmen alone, was the last act of a riotous banquet. *Schaeffer.*

23. *He swore.* The same oath that Ahasuerus made to Queen Esther. (Esther 7.2.)

25. *By and by.* Obsolete in the sense here of immediately. R. V., forthwith.

27. *Beheaded him.* It was not a legal execution of a convicted criminal, but a murder; John had not received a public and fair trial, without which neither the Jewish nor the Roman laws permitted any man to be punished. Compare the case of Daniel, and Darius, Dan. 6. *Schaeffer.*

28. *A charger.* A large platter or dish.

29. *His disciples.* The disciples of John.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

14. *Herod.* This Herod was the son of Herod the Great (who sought to put the infant Jesus to death. Lesson 2 of the first quarter). His full name was Herod Antipas. Upon the death of his father he was made tetrarch of Galilee and Perea. He had married a daughter of Aretas, the

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Arabian King, but became fascinated with Herodias, the wife of his half-brother Philip. Herodias was the granddaughter of Herod the Great The daughter of Aretas learning this, gathered together her jewels and her slaves and returned to her father; Herod married Herodias. Aretas made war upon Herod to avenge his daughter. Instead of going himself, Herod sent a general in command of his forces. Herod's army was annihilated, and Herod forced to make humiliating terms with Aretas.

It was the same Herod whom Christ called a "fox." It was to him that Christ was sent by Pilate to be tried.

17. *For Herodias' sake.* Herodias hated John for telling the truth, and Herod imprisoned him for her sake. Herod forgot that stopping a fire bell will not put out a fire.

20. *Heard him gladly.* Under pretense of hearing John for himself, Herod had invited John to visit him, and the request was a command. At the close of some long day of teaching we see John, in the midst of armed men, riding slowly from the fords of Jordan, up the wild defiles that led to Machærus. From that prison-palace he was destined to emerge alive no more.

Nevertheless it would seem that for a time Herod treated his prisoner with respect and even deference. . . . Herod kept John beside him, says Saint Mark, rather as a prisoner on parole than as a criminal, "and when he heard him he did many things, and heard him gladly." It is difficult to imagine what sort of pleasure Herod found in John's society except the barren pleasure of curiosity. But the implication of Saint Mark's words is that Herod did actually for a time accept John as a kind of spiritual director. . . . Night after night when the revelries of the court were at an end, and silence had fallen on the vast and gloomy fortress, Herod would send for his great prisoner, would profess himself eager to discuss a hundred points of speculative truth, would even listen with a kind of cringing awe to John's lofty moral teachings; but always in the end the conversation broke upon a single sentence, "It is not lawful for thee to have her." *William J. Dawson.*

26. *For his oath's sake.*

> It is a great sin to swear unto a sin,
> But greater sin to keep a sinful oath.
> Who can be bound by any solemn vow
> To do a murderous deed? *Shakespeare.*

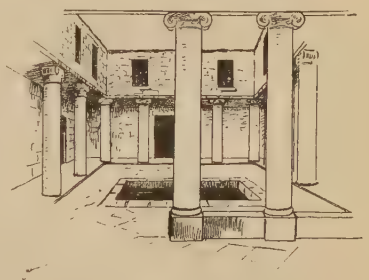
27. *He beheaded him.* The death of John the Baptist was a turning-point in the life of Christ. Christ's Jewish enemies now felt assured that they could put Him to death without opposition from the rulers of the nation, since no protest came from the people when Herod put John to death.

28. *Brought his head in a charger.* It is a weird and ghastly story, but one quite in keeping with the almost grotesquely horrible incidents recorded of the half-barbarous courts of the East, and even of that of Rome, in

this savage age. Herodotus tells the story of the demand made by Amestris, wife of Xerxes, on a birthday festival of her husband, that he should give up the wife of Masistes to her jealous rage, and how, on her persisting, he fancied he could not, on that day, refuse. No entreaty of the unfortunate prince could avail for his wife, whom he loved; Xerxes having once commanded her to be given up to her rival. Nor is the grim parallel to the fury of Herodias wanting, for the spearmen of Xerxes were forthwith sent by the frantic Amestris, and cut her rival to pieces, throwing her in fragments to the dogs. *Geikie, The Life and Words of Christ.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

21. *Herod made a supper to his lords.* Palestine abounds in limestone, well adapted for handsome buildings, and the houses of the great often extended over a large area. An interior court, along the length of which ran a portico, like the cloister of a convent, or the Spanish *patio,* was in the center. In the middle of the court was a well, and here there was a basin which could be used as a bath. Around and outside the square formed by the portico, was a sort of outer court also enclosed by a wall. The house raised upon the columns of the portico might be of several stories. The rooms were sometimes very large, and some were kept exclusively for feasts.



Court of a Rich Oriental House

There were luxurious houses in Jerusalem, inhabited by the rich. The interior of the high priest's house, for example, no doubt resembled the house of a Roman patrician. In these houses there were handsome candelabra, Eastern carpets, perfumed beds of cedar wood, provided with mattresses, pillows, and coverlets. *Edmond Stapfer, Palestine in the Time of Christ.*

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. A lad six years old lifted up his stick to strike a tortoise, but suddenly dropping the stick in great fright, ran as fast as he could to his mother. "A voice cried out to me 'It is wrong,'" he exclaimed. "What was the voice?" "Men call the voice conscience," said the mother, "but I prefer to call it the voice of God. And always your happiness will depend upon obedience to that little voice."

Herod did not obey the voice that told him it was wrong to put John the

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Baptist to death, and the thought of what he had done haunted him all his life. When he heard about Jesus and His miracles, he said that John the Baptist had come to life again.

For Older Pupils. Recall lesson four of the last quarter. Then briefly review what the Gospels tell us about the remainder of John the Baptist's life. Professor Rush Rhees in his *Life of Jesus of Nazareth* gives this excellent outline: "Side by side John and Jesus walked for a time; then the picture fails, but for a hint of a royal audience, with a fearless rebuke of royal disgrace and sin; a prison life, with its pathetic shaking of confidence in the early certainties; a long and forced inaction, and the question put by a wavering faith with its patient and affirmative reply; then a lewd orgy, a king's oath, a girl's demands, a martyr's release, the disciples' lamentations and their report to that One Who, though seeming a rival, was known to appreciate best the greatness of this prophet. Such is the picture in the Gospels."

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. Moral Courage

John the Hero. Wilbur F. Crafts, in *The Christian Herald,* thus portrays the moral heroism of John the Baptist. Let us look on the Bible picture of John the Baptist as a hero, second to none that has lived. Behold him standing before a multitude of excitable Jews, easily roused to passion; plainly—almost personally—pointing out their sins and urging them to repentance. Still more: See him when the Pharisees of his audience congratulated themselves that his denunciations of sin are not for such righteous men as themselves, looking them squarely in the eye and inquiring: "O generation of vipers (they expected rather this greeting: "O models of righteousness"), who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"

But the picture of his grandest courage would present him, calm and bold, in the presence of one who wore a crown and the tinselry of royalty, declaring, in spite of dungeon and death before him, the lust of wickedness, and treason to God's law that this Herod had shown in marrying his brother Philip's wife. While the word Herod has become almost the synonym of hatred as we say, "It out-herods Herod," the world would fain write on the old castle of Machærus, to which John's fidelity condemned him, the inscription, "The Palace of Heroism."

Another Moral Hero.

> What! shall one monk, scarce known beyond his cell,
> Front Rome's far-reaching bolts and scorn her frown?
> Brave Luther answered: "yes"; that thunder's swell
> Rocked Europe, and discharmed the triple crown. *Lowell.*

How Moral Cowardice May be Overcome. Physical cowardice all

of us do not have; indeed, it is rarer than we think. But moral courage is another thing. To dare to do just what we know we ought to do, without being in the least hindered or disturbed by the presence of men who we know will either hate or despise or ridicule us for what we are doing, that is rare indeed. Many think they have it till the test comes. Why, there is in this community to-day an amount of right conviction which, if it were set free into right action by complete release from moral cowardice would be felt through the land. . . .

Cowardice wrings the foul and profane word from the lips that hate it while they utter it. Cowardice stifles the manly and indignant rebuke at the piece of conventional and approved meanness of the college or the shop. Cowardice keeps the low standards of honor traditional and unbroken through generations of boys. Cowardice holds the young Christian back from the frank acknowledgment of his Lord. . . .

"I will walk at liberty because I keep thy commandments." O those great words of David! What an everlasting story they tell of the liberty that comes by lofty service! They tell of what the young people need, at the very outset of life, to save them from cowardice. Not by despising men will you cease to fear them. People's worst slavery very often is to the things and people that they despise. Only by loving God and fearing Him with that fear whose heart and soul is love; only by letting Christ show God to you so that you must see Him; only so shall you tread your cowardice under your feet and be free for your best life. *Phillips Brooks.*

A Would-be Hero. A boy walks along the street, thinking of the knights, the story of whose exploits he has been reading. He wishes that he could have lived in these old times, and thinks what a brave knight he would have been, how he would have protected oppressed ladies, and would have fought the cruel and false knights in the face of any odds. As he thinks about all this, he sees a boy tip over the table of a poor apple-woman by the sidewalk, and then run away and jeer at her from a little distance. Now, the boy that was dreaming about the knight-errant pities the poor woman, and would like to stop and help her pick up her apples; but he does not, for he is afraid that he will be laughed at. So he passes on and gives no sign of the pity or the anger that he feels. I hope, however, that he does not imagine himself any longer to be a brave knight of the olden time, for he has shown that he is nothing but a moral coward. It requires, sometimes, a great deal of heroism to do right, or even not to do wrong, when his companions may make fun of him for it. They may sometimes call him a coward simply because he is so brave, while they are the cowards who go against their will with the majority. *C. C. Everett.*

"It is the greatest courage," says Henry Clay, "to be able to bear the imputation of the want of courage."

The Courage of his Convictions. Abraham Lincoln's boyhood was one long struggle with poverty, with little education, and no in-

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fluential friends. When at last he had begun the practice of the law, it required no little daring to cast his fortune with the weaker side in politics, and thus imperil what small reputation he had gained. Only the most sublime moral courage could have sustained him as president to hold his ground against hostile criticism and a long train of disaster, to issue the Emancipation Proclamation, to support Grant and Stanton against the clamor of the politicians and the press, and, through it all, ever to do what he believed to be right, no matter what others said. *W. A. Smith.*

II. An Awakened Conscience

Herod's Warning to Us. The face of the dead prophet ever haunted Herod; it became to him another conscience. Persius, a Latin poet who lived at the same time as Herod, says that at a later banquet a boiled fish served on a red platter seemed to him the severed head of John the Baptist.

When Herod heard thereof, he said, It is John, whom I beheaded: he is risen from the dead.

"Is it not a powerful picture, is it not a wonderful scene? The banquet hall deserted, the echoes of it long died away, the last footfall long departed, the foolish jests and voluminous oaths of the company now forgotten, the costumes and dresses all folded and laid aside, John himself, the intrepid herald of a New Era, slain and his headless trunk buried; and yet behold Herod, the imperial sinner, shaken and quivering, as with an ague fit, tormented by superstitious forebodings, and declaring as his deliberate opinion that the rugged, righteous prophet of the Jordan had returned to earth—in the person of a Nazarene peasant! . . .

"Those words, 'whom I beheaded,' are significant. Not simply 'This is John,' but 'It is John, whom I beheaded.' There lies the emphasis. Not Herodias the prime mover, nor her bewitching daughter, but I—'I beheaded him.'

"The truth is, a guilty soul is liable to constant irruptions. Anything may remind one of his sins. Beware of seductive sins. Beware of any folly, imprudence, or crooked way. Beware of any act of which you can not approve. For such things have a monstrous longevity. Like the writing of flame on the wall of Belshazzar's palace, the letters glow and burn and start ever fresh into coherence and legibility. Remember Herod Antipas! He seems to say that sin, conscience, retribution, are not fables, but veritable facts which one had better take into account and treat seriously." *John Sparhawk Jones.*

God Upheaves the Soul as well as the Ocean. Man is compelled to repeat to himself things he desires to be silent about, and to listen to what he does not wish to hear, . . . yielding to that mysterious power which says to him, Think. One can no more prevent the mind from returning to an idea than the sea from returning to a shore. With the sailor this is called the tide; with the guilty it is called remorse. God upheaves the soul as well as the ocean. *Victor Hugo.*

In the whirl of excitement conscience is not heard, but the time will come when it will sound and bring misery to the soul. Bessus, a native of Greece, being one day seen by his neighbors pulling down birds' nests, and passionately destroying the young, was severely reproved for his cruelty. He replied that their notes were to him insufferable, as they never ceased twitting him for the murder of his father. *Arvine.*

"Good-bye," I said to my conscience,
"Good-bye, for aye and aye."
And I put her hands off harshly
And turned my face away;
And conscience, smitten sorely,
Returned not from that day.
But a time came when my spirit
Grew weary of its pace,
And I cried, "Come back, my conscience,
And I long to see thy face;"
But conscience cried, "I can not,
Remorse sits in my place." *Paul Lawrence Dunbar.*

The Remorse of Daniel Webster. During the last years of his life, the face of Daniel Webster became strangely sad. The loss of political honor can not account for this. It was the memory of the time when, for the hope of the presidency, he sacrificed his convictions, and made his memorable speech in favor of a law compelling men in the north to return fugitive slaves to their owners. Whittier in his poem, *Ichabod,* says of him:

So fallen! so lost! the light withdrawn
Which once he wore!
The glory from his gray hair gone
Forevermore!
Revile him not, the Tempter hath
A snare for all;
And pitying tears, not scorn and wrath,
Befit his fall!

III. Be Not Drunk with Wine, Wherein is Excess

Wine Dethrones Judgment. Herodias well knew what wine would do for Herod. "She would have killed John" long before this "but she could not" while Herod was sober, for Herod knew that John "was a just man and an holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly." She therefore waited for a "convenient day," a day when Herod gave a great supper and was so drunk with wine that he was ready to promise to give away even half of his kingdom.

The Social Glass. The King of England recently informed the of-

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ficers of the navy that he considered his health "as much honored by those who drink it in water as by those who drink it in wine." When a baronet disobeyed his doctor's orders by drinking a toast to the King in wine, King Edward sent word to him that he did not wish this to happen again. "We are evidently coming to saner days, when it shall no longer be regarded as polite to urge a man to violate his conscience for the sake of being in fashion."

The Effect of Love of Drink and of Remorse. It was a cold, stormy night when a passenger train came to a quick halt between two stations. The engine had blown out a cylinder head, and an express was nearly due upon the same track. To the conductor's order that he hurry back with a red light, Joe, the easy, good-natured brakeman, answered laughingly: "There's no hurry. Wait until I get my overcoat." "Don't waste a minute," said the conductor, "for the express is just due." "All right," said Joe smilingly, and his chief hurried forward to look after the needed repairs on the engine. But Joe stopped to drag on his great overcoat leisurely, and then took another sip from a flat bottle—"a little something to keep the cold out," he said. He had not gone ten paces from his train ere he heard the roar of the onrushing express above the storm king's wail, and began to run like mad toward the curve in the road, but was too late. In one terrible instant of time the engine of the express had telescoped the cars of the standing train, and the shrieks of the wounded and dying passengers mingled with the hissing steam, came with maddening power to his ears. They found Joe the next day in a barn, not far from the scene of the accident, swinging an empty lantern in front of an imaginary train, and crying: "Oh, that I had!" and there is no sadder sound to-day (for this is a true story) in the asylum which shelters him, than the unceasing moan of poor Joe, as he cries incessantly, "Oh, that I had! Oh, that I had!" *W. C. King.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Herod's weakness became wickedness and wretchedness.

May none of us be Herodians in hypocrisy. *Spurgeon.*

Conscience is God's whisper in man's soul. *Hillis.*

Two things fill me with awe; the starry heavens, and the sense of moral responsibility in man. *Kant.*

Lives of great men oft remind us
We can make our lives sublime. *Longfellow.*

We are led by fear as the bear is led by the ring in the nose. *Charles Wagner.*

Let us have faith that right makes might; and in that faith let us, to the end, dare to do our duty as we understand it. *Lincoln.*

The sight of a glittering sword hanging by a hair over the flushed neck

of the youth, is less terrible than the individual conscience of the guilty. *Juvenal.*

Moral courage is nothing in the world but just the capacity for doing what we know we ought to do: give that to every man, and only think with what a stir of eager and vivacious interest this dull world in which we are living would wake and start. *Phillips Brooks.*

Like the genii in Eastern stories, who appear at the rubbing of a lamp, or other trifle, and terrify the beholder, our past misdeeds are often unwittingly summoned, and their presence strikes dread into us. *Maclaren.*

It is not when a villainous act has just been committed that it torments us, it is when we recall it to our recollection a long time afterwards: for the remembrance of it lasts forever. *Rousseau.*

> My conscience hath a thousand several tongues,
> And every tongue brings in a several tale,
> And every tale condemns me for a villain. *Richard III.*

Conscience freshens old recollections, as a chemical bath brings out faded ink; as the years speed on for Eugene Aram, his murderous deed assumes larger proportions and takes on blacker hues. *Hillis.*

Most people dread far more the social frown which follows the doing of something conventionally wrong, than they do the qualms of conscience which follow the doing of something intrinsically wrong. *Herbert Spencer.*

If 'twere done when 'tis done, says Macbeth; but it is not done; there is a resurrection of deeds as well as of bodies, and all our buried badnesses will front us again, shaking their gory locks at us, and saying we did them. *Maclaren.*

In this wicked world, weak men will always be wicked men; for it is less trouble to consent than to resist, and there are more siren voices to whisper "come" than prophets to thunder "It is not lawful." *Maclaren.*

The lamp that is joined to the electric current glows with light: the soul that is joined to the infinite source of courage in God, burns steadfast, serene, and inextinguishable through life and death. *Van Dyke.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

It is not for kings to drink wine, lest they forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any that is affected. Prov. 31.4, 5.

My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not. Prov. 1.10.

Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. 1 John 3.15.

The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe. Prov. 29:25.

Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God. Ec. 5.2.

I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a

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green bay tree. Yet he passed away, and lo, he was not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found. Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace. Psa. 37.35-37.

Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. Rev. 2.10.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for their's is the kingdom of heaven. Matt. 5.10.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

A few years ago one of our fine Cunarders lost her reckoning and came near being lost. It was found that a nail had been driven in the pilot house carelessly near the compass, and had deflected it a little so that it was not trustworthy to steer by. To be sure, the deflection was very slight, but in the width of an ocean voyage it made not a little difference in the direction of the vessel.

Just so is it with conscience: it is liable to become deflected by very little things. This is the reason why we should always act with decision even in the smallest matters of duty—in order to keep conscience true. If you allow it to be deflected even a little you lose your reckoning, and losing reckoning you are liable to make shipwreck of your soul. *Gerard B. Hallock, in The Treasury.*

THE LESSON SUMMARY

As the fame of Jesus spread, various were the conjectures about Him; some said He was Elias, others said He was one of the prophets, but Herod said "It is John, whom I beheaded." No wonder the memory of his foul murder of John haunted him. He had not intended to put John to death, but he had weakly yielded to Herodias and put John in prison. Herodias was not satisfied with this, but sought an opportunity to have John put to death. That opportunity came when Herod held a birthday feast. Her daughter Salome danced before the guests and so pleased the intoxicated king that he promised to give her whatsoever she wished. The girl flew to her mother. Revenge was sweeter than any gift of jewels or palaces, and she bade Salome ask the head of John the Baptist. "Straightway with haste" the daughter did her bidding. Herod shrank from this hideous wish, fear and remorse seized him, and then in yet greater fear of the ridicule and criticisms of his guests, he gave the command to the executioners. The gory head was brought upon one of the golden dishes that graced the table and given to Salome, who carried it triumphantly to her mother.

The ministry of John had been short, only two years in duration, but he

had finished his course, he was ready to die a martyr's death. "Above the bravest of the servants of the race," says Doctor Herron, "the messenger of the Messiah rises in solitary grandeur, like one of the majestic peaks God lifts above the Sierras and clothes with the clouds. He was true to the greatest and most perilous trust that God had ever imposed upon a man. He stood undaunted amidst the mightiest temptations that had ever beset a man's loyalty and faith. He marks the highest reach of human unselfishness."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. It is a sin against the genius of Christianity, and an ignoring of the whole progress of revelation, if we think that David or any of the Old Testament saints had surer guidance by outward signs than we have by the voice within. *Alexander Maclaren.*

2. The merchant who, through fear of losing property or of failing to gain it, consents to lies and bribery, the politician who does the same thing through fear of losing his place, the public teacher who flinches in telling the truth which it is his duty to tell, are all baser cowards than is the soldier who, in the panic fear of losing his life, turns his back upon his officer and precipitately leaves the field of battle. *George Trumbull Ladd.*

3. For John himself we need not lament. What better fate can happen to a hero than to leave the stage of action in the moment when his work is done? The most tragic page in the life of genius has been that which tells the melancholy history of waning influence, gradual desertion, superseded methods and ideas, and unwilling resignation to a new spirit of the time. *William J. Dawson.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Tell the story of the feeding of the five thousand. (Mark 6.30–44.) 2. This is the only miracle recorded by all four evangelists. In what respect is it different from the other recorded miracles of Jesus? 3. Read in John 6.22-65 the conversation that Jesus had with the multitude after this miracle. 4. What other miraculous supplies of food are mentioned in the Bible? Quails and manna, Ex. 16.11-18; Elijah fed by ravens, 1 Kings 17.2-6; by the widow, 1 Kings 17.8-16; by an angel, 1 Kings 19.4-8; the feeding of the four thousand, Mark 8.1-9; the great draught of fishes after the resurrection of Jesus, John 21.4-13. 5. Tell the story of another helpful child. (2 Kings 5.2, 3.)

BETWEEN LESSON VIII AND LESSON IX

No intervening events are recorded.

FEEDING THE FIVE THOUSAND

Mark 6.30-44 (Read Matt. 14.13-21; Luke 9.10-17.) Commit v. 41.

Golden Text

My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. John 6.32.

Time: Early spring, A. D. 29.

Place: Northern shore of Sea of Galilee. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 42–44 and 34.

LESSON TEXT. MARK 6.30–44

30 And the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught.

31 And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.

32 And they departed into a desert place by ship privately.

33 And the people saw them departing, and many knew him, and ran afoot thither out of all cities, and outwent them, and came together unto him.

34 And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things.

35 And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, This is a desert place, and now the time *is* far passed.

36 Send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat.

37 He answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat?

38 He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes.

39 And he commanded them to make all sit down by companies upon the green grass.

40 And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties.

41 And when he had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave *them* to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all.

42 And they did all eat, and were filled.

43 And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments, and of the fishes.

44 And they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

30. *The Apostles.* The disciples had just returned from their apostolic work (vv. 7-13) and Mark now calls them apostles, for the first and only time. *What they had done,* on their preaching tour, 6.12, 13.

31. *Coming and going.* The passover was nigh. (John 6.4.)

32. *A desert place.* Near Bethsaida (Luke); on the eastern side of the Lake (John).

33. *The people outwent them.* The distance by land from the place where they started is about twenty miles. *Bickersteth.*

40. *In ranks.* Lit., *like beds in a garden.* The former adverb, *by companies,* describes the arrangement; this, the color. The red, blue, and yellow clothing of the poorest Orientals make an Eastern crowd full of color; a fact which would appeal to Peter's eye, suggesting the appearance of flower-beds in a garden. *Vincent.*

The purpose of the arrangement was probably to prevent a dangerous scramble for food, or at any rate, confusion and disorder, and to secure an easy and rapid distribution. *Swete.*

37. *Two hundred pennyworth.* Thirty dollars, a large amount then, since a denarius, or "penny," was the hire of a day's labor. *Schaff.*

38. *When they knew.* They found a lad with this food. (John 6.8, 9.) *Two fishes.* Fish were dried or pickled and eaten with bread.

41. *And blessed.* The customary form of blessing, which Christ probably used, was, "Blessed art Thou, Jehovah, our God, who causeth bread to come forth from the earth." *Edersheim. Brake and gave.* The verbs are in different tenses; the former in the aorist, the latter in the imperfect. He brake and kept giving out. *Vincent.*

43. *Fragments.* The pieces of bread broken off, but not distributed.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

38. *Five, and two fishes.* As we judge by combining the various statements, there was a lad there who carried the scant, humble provisions for the party—perhaps a fisher-lad brought for the purpose from the boat. It would take quite what Philip had reckoned—about two hundred denarii—if the Master wanted them to go and buy victuals for all that multitude. Probably the common bag—at any rate, as computed by Judas, who carried the bag—did not contain that amount. *Edersheim.*

40. *They sat down in ranks.* Nothing was done until the crowding and confusion had ceased, and even the divine beneficence waits until the turbulent mass has become quiet, settled down into serried lines, the five thousand making two perfect squares. "Order," it is said, "is Heaven's first law;" but whether the first or the second, certain it is that Heaven gives us the perfection of order. What rhythmic motions are in the marches of the stars and the processions of the seasons! To everything a

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place, to everything a time; such is the unwritten law of the realm of physics, where Law is supreme and anarchy is unknown. So in our earthly lives, on their secular and on their spiritual side alike, order is time, order is strength, and he who is deficient in this grace should practise on it the more. Avoid slovenliness; it is a distant relative to sin itself. Arrange your duties and do not let them crowd one on the other. Set the greater duties, not abreast, but one behind the other, filling up the spaces with the smaller ones. *Henry Burton.*

41. *Gave them to his disciples to set before them.* "We are co-workers together with God." Christ performs the miracle of multiplying the loaves and fishes, but the multiplied food must reach the hungry thousands through the hands of the disciples. Between Christ and the people there is still the human ministry. It is a law of Christ's Kingdom that, whenever possible, divine gifts are passed to men through other men. The Saviour's parting commission to His disciples and through them to the church, must be carried out through human instrumentality. *Alexander Urquhart.*

42. *They did all eat.* Only men who think, stand awestruck in the presence of the accustomed. The ordinary man is dulled by phenomena which are repeated. That a farmer tossing a few grains of wheat into the ground should be able to feed five thousand men, is indeed wonderful to the man who stops to think about it, but the thing has been done so many times that we number it among the commonplaces, and hurry on to catch at something more spectacular and unique. That matter should increase in the warm and wonder-working hands of God's only Son is not, when rightly looked at, a whit more marvelous than that grains of wheat should multiply when acted on by the forces of God's earth. *Charles E. Jefferson.*

Loaves of Bread

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

38. *How many loaves have ye?* The loaves of bread were very thin, round or oval in shape, and made of barley for the poor and of wheat for the rich. The bread was always broken, never cut. The Arabs at the present day have the same "circles of bread."

"The midday meal of a middle class house in Jerusalem in the first century consisted of fish from the lake, locusts baked in flour or honey, onions, and meat. For dessert the cheapest fruits were grapes and figs. The poor had to live more moderately. The lake fishermen, in particular, rarely tasted meat; bread, hard boiled eggs, and

the produce of their fishing, with locusts and water, formed the staple of their food."

43. *Twelve baskets.* When traveling, a Jew had a basket, or wallet, slung from his shoulders in which he carried his food, that he might be sure of having nothing that would be deemed "unclean" according to Jewish regulations. Hence the Romans gave the Jews the name of "basket-carriers."

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Doctor Lyman Abbott has given us this beautiful parable about the acorn:

"I pluck an acorn from the greensward, and hold it to my ear; and this is what it says to me: 'By and by the birds will come and nest in me. By and by I will furnish shade for the cattle. By and by I will provide warmth for the home in the pleasant fire. By and by I will be shelter from storm to those who have gone under the roof. By and by I will be the strong ribs of the great vessel, and the tempest will beat against me in vain, while I carry men across the Atlantic.' 'O foolish little acorn, wilt thou be all this?' I ask. And the acorn answers, 'Yes; God and I.'"

This parable teaches the same truth that our lesson of to-day teaches: that very small means may accomplish very great results, in the hands of divine power.

For Older Pupils. What a contrast there is between the banquet of Herod of our last lesson and the banquet of Christ in our lesson for to-day! "When a convenient day was come, Herod on his birthday made a supper to the lords, high captains, and chief estates of Galilee." Then followed the feasting and wine drinking, the dancing and revelry, the awful tragedy, and the remorse of the murderer. That scene is fresh in your minds. Now we turn to a banquet held in the open air. A hungry multitude is seated on the green grass of a hillside, the fare is simple, five barley loaves and two fishes, but being blessed by Jesus, it suffices for the great throng. The end of the banquet is peaceful. The guests depart, and the Host "departed into a mountain to pray." "The one is the feast to which the world invites; the other is the feast which Christ provides for all who are willing to 'labor not for the meat that perisheth, but for that which endureth unto eternal life.'"

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. How Many Loaves Have Ye?

Faith in a great God. Up to this point the disciples placed the needs of the multitude and the insufficient supply at their command, between

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them and their Master, instead of putting the unlimited power of Christ between them and the needs of the people. It is ever thus. Elijah on Mount Carmel, with the consciousness of God's presence, worked wonders, and put to confusion the hundreds of Baal's worshippers. But Elijah, with eyes turned from God, is cowed with the threat of an impious woman. David, the shepherd lad, with a sling and a smooth stone, is able, through trust in God, to achieve more than the armies of Israel. It is the same to-day. God is able to take the smallest gift or talent, and make it mighty in His hand. What is needed is not so much great faith, as faith in a great God. Faith in one who is able to do exceeding abundant above all that we can ask or think. *Alexander Urquhart.*

What can God do through us? The story is told of Paganini, the great violinist, that he once wished to make a great impression upon his audience in Paris, and deliberately broke one of his violin strings. The crowd looked its tremendous disappointment. Then he broke a second and a third string, and then amid the uproar he stepped to the front of the stage and said, "Ladies and gentlemen, one string and Paganini!" and wonderful music came from that one string.

"One string and Paganini!" One lad with a few loaves and fishes and Jesus Christ! Looking at our own little faith, little knowledge, and little powers, and then at the hungry world's needs, we are apt to say, "What is this among so many?" But we must not forget that "our sufficiency is of God," and that in giving of our store it increases wonderfully. "There is that scattereth abroad and yet increaseth."

"I became a Christian, and it seemed as if just to get this soul of mine saved was all that I could dare to try," Phillips Brooks tells us. "But as the Saviour's strength becomes more manifest to me, as I know Him more, I see that He is able to do much more than that. I begin to aspire to have a little part in the great conquest of the world in which He is engaged. And so the soldier of the Cross is at last out in the very thick of the battle, striking at all his Master's enemies, in the perfect assurance of his Master's strength."

"Consider the mighty works that God has wrought through the hands of man. Think of the great influence of thousands of Sunday-schools scattered all over the world. How did that begin? In the efforts of poor printer Robert Raikes to teach the ragged children of Gloucester. Think of the beautiful charity which carries vast multitudes of little ones every summer out of the crowded city into the fresh air of the country. How did that begin? In the attempts of a country minister to bring a score of poor children to spend a few days in the farmhouses of his scanty parish. What can we do? Nothing. What can God do with us? Anything; whatsoever He will." *Henry van Dyke.*

God Supplements our Work. Herkomer, the great English portrait painter, had a father who in his younger days had possessed skill in

modeling in clay. In his old age he continued his work, but grieved each night because he feared his hand had lost its cunning. As soon as his father was asleep, however, Herkomer would take the tools and perfect the work. In the morning the father would exclaim delightedly, "Ah, I can do it as well as ever! The work speaks for itself!" "In some such way," says Doctor David Gregg, "the spirit of God will supplement your work and make up for your defects."

Evan Roberts, a young miner of twenty-six years, wholly uneducated save in the Scriptures, one whom the papers at first said lacked the qualities of leadership, became nevertheless the leader of the great Welsh revival of last year. G. Campbell Morgan said of him, "Evan Roberts is hardly more than a boy, simple and natural, no orator, no leader of men; nothing of the masterfulness that characterized such men as Wesley, and Whitfield, and Moody. I do not hesitate to say, however, that God has set His hand upon the lad. He has put him in the forefront of the movement that the world may see that He does choose the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty; a man who lacks all the essential qualities which we say make for greatness, in order that through him in simplicity and power He may move to victory."

II. Gather Up the Fragments That Nothing Be Lost

Profusion, but no Waste. This is the lesson that nature reads us everywhere. The dead leaves of this autumn are worked into next year's soil. The little stream that has watered the greenness of many meadows goes afterwards to do duty in the great sea. The vast surrounding atmosphere is made efficient over and over again for the breath of living men. Everywhere profusion, but no waste. *Phillips Brooks.*

How a Great Bank Saves Money. A simple illustration, says *The World's Work*, will show the care that is taken of cents by the First National Bank of Chicago, where millions of dollars are handled. Stamped postal cards are not used, and not one of the thousands of routine letters that are written daily are stamped or sealed until the whole routine mail of the day is assembled in the afternoon. Then all the cards and letters to one correspondent are put in a single envelope, and—except for letters from the officers and the like—the bank comes as near as possible to getting its entire mail carried at two cents an ounce, or a cent for every postal card, instead of often paying two cents for a quarter of an ounce, as it would have to do if every communication was sealed and stamped separately.

This little matter of getting full value out of a two-cent stamp makes a saving of from twenty-five to thirty dollars a day.

A Useless Waste. If a man smokes a cigar daily, that costs but five and a half cents, from the age of twenty to the age of seventy, he puffs away, to the damage of his health, probably as well as of his purse,

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positively, five thousand and eight hundred dollars. *William Mathews.*

Nothing Wasted. "I get four dollars a week, free rent, and the disposal of any dump of value," said a "dump boss" as reported in the *Philadelphia Press.*

"Tin cans, for instance, belong to me if they are dumped here, and I make a pretty penny out of them. They are turned, you know, into tin soldiers and so forth.

"Corks are another perquisite of mine. Many and many an old broken bottle on this dump has a good cork in it. I get eight cents a pound for all the corks I find.

"Old shoes are never too old to be sold. They have always one good piece—the piece over the instep—that can be used again. The smaller pieces of good leather cut out of them are made into purses and wristlets.

"Egg-shells have a value, too. Something like one million pounds of egg-shell is used every year in the manufacture of kid gloves and print calicos.

"Do you see those eighteen barrels behind there? Well, each of those barrels contains its own variety of assorted marketable dumpage. Each will sell, when filled, at a good price. There are, I believe, fifty-seven varieties of marketable dumpage, and some dumps yield all the varieties. Mine yields twenty-nine."

Gather up the Fragments of Opportunities. Gather up the fragments that remain of the bereaved and shattered life, the broken home, and the broken health. It may be that from the few scattered pieces you may gather together enough to fill twelvefold some home or some life. Instead of saying, "So many gone from my presence across the river, and I left alone; what am I?" or, "So much to be done, and here am I with crippled hands, or suffering head, or fluttering heart; what can I do?" Pray a blessing and a heavenly strength upon what remains, and gather together the broken fragments.

If it is health that has forsaken you, gather up what little energy remains to you, nourish it as well as you can, hope and pray for more strength. Do not give up hope, and settle down sadly as an invalid, but, if you must be an invalid, see what you can do to make your life as an invalid as rich, helpful, and bright as possible. Gather up the fragments of the opportunities left, that none of them be wasted. Gather up the fragments always, that nothing in your life be wasted; for, at the last, we shall be called to account for what has been given us, not for what has been taken away. *Clara R. Bush, in Sunday School Times.*

III. My Father Giveth You the True Bread from Heaven

Jesus Illustrated our Golden Text. Jesus had thus supplied the wants of the needy, in a way the full significance of which was as yet far beyond what the disciples either understood or dreamed, for He had

shown how there dwelt in Him a virtue sufficient to meet all higher wants, as well as the lower, so that none who believed in Him would ever have either hunger or thirst of soul any longer, but would find in Him their all. Had they known it, He had shown them that He Himself was their Bread of Life, that came down from Heaven. *Geikie, Life of Christ.*

Soul-Food. You can not be a vigorous, useful, soul-winning Christian without plenty of nourishing soul-food. A certain man of God in old times said: "Thy words were food and I did *eat* them." Those who read little else but novels and secular newspapers, and other thin diet, soon become walking skeletons. Begin every morning with fervent prayer, and breakfast your soul on God's glorious, infallible, inspiring Book. The well-equipped soldier of Christ not only puts on the whole armor, but knows how to wield the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. *Theodore L. Cuyler.*

The Example of the Chinaman. "My heart ate up the good news as I read." These were the words in which the old Chinaman expressed what the words of Jesus were to him. Before the Boxer outbreak, he had bought from the missionary a copy of the Gospels. In those strange, wonderful words of Jesus, this heathen had found just what his hungry heart had been craving. That good news was bread—the Bread of Life. It satisfied. *Zillah Foster Stevens, in Sunday School Times.*

To Feed on Christ is to Get His Strength into Us to be our Strength. You feed on the cornfield and the strength of the cornfield comes into you and is your strength. You feed on the cornfield and then go and build your house, and it is the cornfield in your strong arms that builds the house, that cuts down the trees, and piles the stone, and lifts the roof into its place. You feed on Christ and then go and live your life, and it is Christ in you that helps the poor, that tells the truth, that fights the battle, and that wins the crown.

But what is this strength of Christ that comes to us? There can be only one answer: It is His character. There is no strength that is communicable except in character. It is the moral qualities of His nature that are to enter into us and be ours because we are His.

Where is the task that terrifies the man who lives by Christ? Where is the discouragement over which he will not walk to go to the right which he must reach? You may starve him, but he has this inner food. You may darken his life, but he has this inner light. You may make war about him, but he has this peace within. You may turn the world into a hell, but he carries his inner Heaven safely through its fiercest fires. He is like Christ Himself. He has meat to eat that we know not of, and in the strength of it he overcomes at last and is conqueror through his Lord. It is possible for all of us. *Phillips Brooks.*

The Bread of Life Made Cake. I remember what bread was to me when I was a boy. I could not wait till I was dressed in the morning,

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but ran and cut a slice from the loaf—all the way round, too—to keep me until breakfast; and at breakfast, if diligence in eating earned wages, I should have been well paid. And then I could not wait for dinner, but ate again, and then at dinner; and I had to eat again before tea, at tea, and lucky if I didn't eat again after that. It was bread, bread, all the time with me, bread that I lived on and got strength from. Just so religion is the Bread of Life; but you make it cake—you put it away in your cupboard, and never use it but when you have company. You cut it into small pieces, and pass it daintily around, instead of treating it as bread—common, hearty bread, to be used every hour. *Henry Ward Beecher.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

A crowd is an opportunity. *Morgan.*

Christ never indulged in emotions which did not lead to work. *Maclaren.*

Heavenly bread is never blessed until it is broken. *Chicago Tribune.*

The Gospel of the Lord is like this bread of the miracle; it grows when it is used and multiplies when it is divided. *Bauslin.*

Do good with what thou hast, or it will do thee no good. *Stretch.*

If you know how to spend less than you get, you have the philosopher's stone. *Franklin.*

Earthly arithmetic says: "Give and want"; heavenly arithmetic says: "Give and grow rich." *Schauffler.*

God wins great fights with small bands. *Morgan.*

There is one thing in this world better than making a living, and that is making a life. *W. E. Russell.*

God is so great that He communicates greatness to the least thing that is done for His service. *Wesley.*

It is almost as presumptuous to think you can do nothing as to think you can do everything. *Phillips Brooks.*

Attempt great things for God; expect great things from God. *Carey.*

The knowledge of our own unfitness is the first condition of fitness. *Maclaren.*

The little boy who does not speak a word, but whose scant resources are the basis on which Jesus builds His mighty deed, is he not still among us, and is he not still too often overlooked? *Charles E. Jefferson.*

A place for everything and everything in its proper place; a time for everything and everything at its right time. *Old Maxim.*

Within Christ's heart were untold depths of sympathy, the "fellow-feeling that makes man wondrous kind." *Henry Burton.*

The plea of incompetence may be the cloak that covers laziness, selfishness, and all the other sins that make so many idle Christians. *Maclaren.*

What wonderful things have been done, and are being done to-day, without rank, or anything which the world calls power or endowment; but simply and solely because God Almighty has blessed them. *John McNeill.*

Behind the snowy loaf is the mill-wheel; behind the mill-wheel is the wheat-field; on the wheat-field rests the sunlight; above the sun is God. *Lowell.*

Although the demands seem to be immense, and the supply utterly deficient, we are thereby urged to fling ourselves back the more certainly and quickly upon the infinite supply that is always ours because Christ is always with us. *John McNeill.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

We are laborers together with God. 1 Cor. 3.9.

Our sufficiency is of God. 2 Cor. 3.5.

So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. 1 Cor. 3.7.

Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Eph. 5.20.

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. Isa. 55.8, 9.

There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. Prov. 11.24.

My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Phil. 4.19.

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. Phil. 4.13.

Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you. John 6.27.

Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. John 6.35.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

The thought that shines through all others as we read this narrative is the genial tenderness of Christ. He is here seen to be considerate of our wants, mindful of our weaknesses, quick to calculate our prospects and to provide for us, simple, practical, earnest in His love. We see how He withholds no good thing from us, but considers and gives what we actually need. We see how reasonable it is that He should

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require us to trust Him. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. *Marcus Dods.*

THE LESSON SUMMARY

With no leisure so much as to eat, Jesus and His disciples crossed "into a desert place by ship privately," but He could not escape the crowds. They saw Him depart, and followed after. Jesus welcomed them as He always did, and taught them. When the day was far spent, His disciples would send them away for food, but Jesus said, "Give ye them to eat." Calling for the scanty food they had with them—five loaves and two fishes—and blessing it, He gave it to the disciples for distribution to the hungry people seated in regular companies on the grass.

"Here was He Who could do everything," says Bishop Brooks. "What hindered him from sweeping the loaves they had with them aside, and, by a superb exercise of power, bidding the very desert where they stood burst into a wilderness of fruits? But no! He brings out the poor remnant which was so little and so miserable that they had thought nothing of it. It seems as if there were two principles here. The first is the principle of continuity, that what is to be must come to be by an enlargement, a development, a change and growth of old things; and the second is the principle of economy, that nothing, however little or poor, is to be wasted."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. This event was the culmination of the popularity of Jesus.

2. The Church needs the putting forth of Christ's power through His disciples.

3. The responsibility of the church for the physical and industrial life of the surrounding community.

4. If the Church would rise to her strength, she would to-morrow send messengers with the Bread of Life in a hundredfold degree as compared with anything she has yet done. *John McNeill.*

5. "We teach our people," said a labor leader, "that thrift is no virtue." "Thrift," said John Burns at the Trades Union Congress of 1894, "was invented by capitalist rogues to deprive honest fools of their proper standard of comfort, so that their balance in the bank would be in proportion to the capacity of the workers to allow themselves to be deprived of their share of the national wealth."

6. It would be a dark day for the divine Kingdom in the world if the Church should forget that the spiritual needs of men are really the deepest and most pressing; but it too often lays itself open to the scorn of the

world by forgetting what its Master did, and leaving to unchristian men the work of practical sympathy which ought to be dear to itself. *S. H. Knight.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. What do the words *disciple* and *apostle* mean? 2. Read Matt. 15.1-20 and Mark 7.1-23 to see how Jesus discomfited the Pharisees and thereby made them hate Him yet more intensely. 3. Tell the story of Jacob wrestling with the angel. (Gen. 32.24-29.) 4. What two lessons of this quarter have taught that great faith is rewarded? (April 15, April 22.) What lesson of the first quarter taught the same truth? (Feb. 25.) 5. Tell the story of the faith of the two blind men. (Matt. 9.27-30.) 6. Read the earnest prayer of David. (Psa. 86.) 7. Make a list of the important events in Christ's life that occurred during the *Second Period of The Galilean Ministry (Part V),* from the choosing of the Twelve to the withdrawal into Northern Galilee (Lesson 10). (Matt. 5; 6; 7; 8; 10; 11; 12.22-50; 13; 14; 15.1-20; Mark 3.13-35; 4; 5; 2.15-22; 6; 7.1-23; Luke 6.12-49; 7; 8; 11.14-54; 12; 13.1-9; 5.29-39; 9.1-17; John 6.)

BETWEEN LESSON IX AND LESSON X

After the miracle of feeding the five thousand, Jesus sent away the multitudes, bade His disciples cross to the other side of the Lake, and went Himself to spend the night in prayer upon the mountain. A great storm arose, and in the fourth watch of the night Jesus was seen by His disciples walking upon the Sea. "Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee on the water!" cried Peter. "Come," said Jesus. Peter started, but becoming fearful, began to sink. "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" Jesus put forth His hand, and saved him.

The day following, Jesus delivered to the multitude His discourse on the Bread of Life, recorded in John 6.22-71. His popularity had reached its climax with the feeding of the five thousand. The reaction came when He refused to be proclaimed king: the people then doubted that He was the promised Messiah. The Pharisees followed up their attacks by complaining that His disciples "transgressed the tradition of the elders" by eating with unwashed hands, and Jesus rebuked them for transgressing God's commands. They were but "hypocrites—blind leaders of the blind."

With Lesson X, begins *Part VI, The Third Period of the Galilean Ministry,* from the withdrawal into Northern Galilee until the final departure for Jerusalem.

THE GENTILE WOMAN'S FAITH

Mark 7.24-30. (Read Matt. 15.1-28.) Commit v. 30.

Golden Text

Great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt. Matt. 15.28.

Time: Summer, A. D. 29.

Place: Region of Tyre and Sidon. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 45, 46, and 124.

LESSON TEXT. MARK 7.24-30

24 And from thence he arose, and went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and entered into an house, and would have no man know *it:* but he could not be hid.

25 For a *certain* woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of him, and came and fell at his feet:

26 The woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by nation; and she besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter.

27 But Jesus said unto her, Let the children first be filled: for it is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast *it* unto the dogs.

28 And she answered and said unto him, Yes, Lord: yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs.

29 And he said unto her, For this saying go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter.

30 And when she was come to her house, she found the devil gone out, and her daughter laid upon the bed.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

24. *From thence.* From the region about the Sea of Galilee. *Into the borders of Tyre and Sidon.* Into Phenicia. This journey took Jesus beyond Jewish territory. *Could not be hid.* People from Tyre and Sidon had come to hear Jesus in His early ministry (3.8), and His fame had preceded Him here.

26. *A Greek.* In Palestine, this term meant merely a Gentile. *A Syrophenician.* A Phenician of Syria in a distinction from a Phenician of Carthage, Africa. Matthew calls her a Canaanitish woman. Both Phenicia and Canaan were terms used sometimes to denote the coast lands of Palestine. *She besought him.* See Matthew 15.23-25.

27. *The children* refers to the Jews; *the dogs,* to the Gentiles. *Meet,*

fitting, good. *To cast it unto the dogs.* The answer has a somewhat harsh sound, but it did not go beyond the language with which the woman must have been familiar, and it was probably but a common proverb, like our "Charity begins at home," indicating the line of demarcation which gave a priority to the claims of the family of Israel to those of strangers. *Plumptre.*

28. *Yes, Lord . . . crumbs.* This use of Jesus' own words to neutralize the seeming rebuff, has been regarded rightly as a unique combination of faith and wit. It means, there is a place for dogs in the household, and there is a place for Gentiles in God's world. *Gould.*

29. *For this saying, go thy way.* Because of the faith her answer showed. (See Matthew 15.28.) This woman and the centurion (Matthew 8.10) are the two Gentiles of the Gospels whose faith Jesus praised and compared with the disbelief of the Israelites.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

25. *She fell at His feet.*

Just to give up and trust
All to a fate unknown,
Plodding along life's road in the dust,
Bounded by walls of stone;
Never to have a heart at peace;
Never to see when care will cease;
Just to be still when sorrows fall—
This is the bitterest lesson of all.

Just to give up and rest
All on a love secure,
Out of a world that's hard at the best,
Looking to Heaven as sure;
Ever to hope, through cloud and fear,
In darkest night that the dawn is near;
Just to wait at the Master's feet—
Sure, now, the bitter is sweet. *Henry van Dyke.*

27. *It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it unto the dogs.* Let us learn how inconsistent pride of race or the spirit of caste is with the gospel of Christ. What the Pharisee was among the Jews, that the Jews were themselves at that time among the nations. They "trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others." To be a child of Abraham according to the flesh, was in their estimation of far higher consequence than to be a Roman citizen, and they looked down upon all other races as if they belonged to a lower order. We know how much was needed before Peter would consent to preach to the household

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of Cornelius, and how the members of the church at Jerusalem were stirred when they heard that he had actually done so. That was subsequent to the ascension of Christ, and the giving of the commission to preach the gospel among all nations; and therefore we can easily understand that at the time to which the narrative before us belongs, the disciples were anything but well-disposed toward Gentiles. They were, in fact, just like all other Jews of their day, narrow, bigoted, race-proud, and contemptuous to all Gentiles. . . .

The spirit of the Pharisee lives again in those who treat with injustice and contempt the man who "is guilty of a skin not colored like his own," whether it be black like that of the negro, or red like that of the Indian, or brown like that of the Mongolian. *William M. Taylor, The Miracles of Our Saviour.*

29. *For this saying go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter.* His words were like the hard steel that strikes the flint and brings out a shower of sparkles. Faith makes obstacles into helpers and stones of stumbling into stepping-stones to higher things. If we will take the place which He gives us, and hold fast our trust in Him even when He seems silent, and will so far penetrate His designs as to find the hidden purpose of good in apparent repulses—the honey secreted deep in the flower—we shall share in this woman's blessing in the measure in which we share in her faith. *Alexander Maclaren.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

Oriental Dogs

26. *A certain woman came and besought Him.* To any one who has ever held any prominent or official position in the East, the persistency of pleading women is a fact which he will never forget. They will not be driven from their purpose by a rough manner. Severe language does not deter them. They are not wearied by delays. They will sit and wait hour after hour, and come day after day, ignoring all kinds of refusals. They are importunate beyond anything that is ever experienced in our Western life. *Selah Merrill.*

28. *The dogs under the table.* The dog is never mentioned in the New Testament except with contempt. The Eastern dog is the public scavenger; he is dirty and repulsive,

owns no master, but roams freely about the streets, and is kicked about and regarded as a nuisance. "The expression 'dog of a Gentile,'" says Edmond Stapfer, "was as common in the first century in Palestine as the term 'dog of a Christian' became subsequently."

While dogs were rarely admitted into the houses by the Jews, who regarded them as "unclean," they were made household pets by the Greeks. The Greek word for dogs used by the Syrophenician woman was a diminutive of endearment. "The crumbs" were not only those that fall by accident, but those also thrown to the dogs. It was customary to put one's hands into the common dish, wipe them upon the soft pieces of bread, and then throw this bread to the dogs under the table.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. In the Old Testament there is a story about Gideon, which shows how he was tried by God, after he had gathered a large army to advance against the Midianites at God's command. He feared that he had too few to meet the enemy, but the Lord said, "The people that are with thee are too many. . . . Now, therefore, go to, proclaim in the ears of the people, 'Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return and depart early from Mount Gilead.'" Gideon did this, and "there returned of the people twenty and two thousand; and there remained ten thousand."

This must have been a great discouragement to Gideon, but even now the number is too large. By another sifting process directed by God, the army is reduced to three hundred. After this severe trial of Gideon's faith, that he might not be over-tried the Lord gave him a sign to show him that his weak army would prevail against the enemy's strength.

Just as Gideon's faith was tested by God, so Jesus tested the faith of a woman who came to him asking that he would free her daughter from an evil spirit.

For Older Pupils. The *Galilean ministry,* properly so called, ended with the return of the apostles from their preaching tour. (Mark 6.30.) The plan of Christ to withdraw from active work in Galilee, was interrupted by the crowds of Passion week who followed Him to Bethsaida—Julias. The Pharisees had long been openly hostile to Jesus, the death of John the Baptist, the aroused suspicion of Herod, the wild outburst of the people, who, after the miracle of the multiplied loaves and fishes, sought to force on Him a Jewish Messiah-Kingship, their disappointment and subsequent disaffection, all were signs to Jesus that He must withdraw from Galilee and in retirement prepare His disciples for His approaching death. He went "into the borders of Tyre and Sidon" and remained in the pagan provinces nearly six months. Only a few incidents of these months are given by the Evangelists. The most important one forms our lesson to-day.

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LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. Perseverance

The Perseverance of the Syrophenician Woman. In the fifteenth chapter of Matthew, the persistence of this woman in her request, in the face of the apparent indifference of Christ, is more clearly shown than in our lesson from Mark. When she besought him to heal her daughter, Jesus did not answer her, and when the disciples would send her away, "for she crieth after us," then Jesus said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Still she persevered in her prayer, and Jesus then uttered the seemingly cold words of the twenty-seventh verse of our lesson. But quickly came the bright words of her retort courteous: "Yes, Lord: yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs."

In the *Expositors' Bible,* John Monro Gibson compares this woman with Jacob as he wrestled with the angel. "See Jacob in sore distress at the brook Jabbok," he says. "A man is wrestling with him—wrestling with him all the night, until the break of day. It is no mere man, for Jacob finds, before all is over, that he has been face to face with God. The Man who wrestled with him is indeed the same as He who wrestled with this woman of Canaan. The Divine Man struggles to get away without blessing the patriarch. Jacob cries, in the very desperation of his faith, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me!" The victory is won. The blessing is granted, and these words are added: "What is thy name?" "Jacob." "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel" (i. e., prince with God): "for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed."

Was this woman, then, or was she not, "a prince" with God? Did she, or did she not, belong to the true house of Israel? Let us now look back to Matt. 15.8, 9: "This people (i. e., the children of Israel according to the flesh) honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me." In vain do they worship: are they, then, princes with God? Nay, verily; they are only actors before Him, as the Saviour plainly says. Truly, they are all Israel who are of Israel; and just as truly they are not the only Israel who are of Israel, for here is this woman of Canaan who earns the name of Israel by as hard a contest, and as great a victory, as that of Jacob at the brook Jabbok, when first the name was given."

Steadfast Resolution. Being in earnest in any matter is to live, to think, to act in and from the very heart of that matter; to hold already within the mind, in any enterprise or undertaking, the assurance of success.

Luther at Worms, before the august company of the kings, potentates and rulers of this world, asked if he would take back the message he had

given to men, replied in the well known words: "I can not retract. Here I stand. I can not do otherwise. May God help me." Luther was in earnest.

In 1831 William Lloyd Garrison gave his message to the world in these words: "I will be as harsh as truth, as uncompromising as justice, I will not equivocate, I will not excuse, I will not retreat, and I will be heard." Garrison was in earnest. *George G. Hamilton.*

Trollope, in one of his novels, gives us this maxim which is constantly used by a brickmaker—"It is dogged as does it."

"Perhaps there is no more important component of character than steadfast resolution," says Theodore Roosevelt. "The boy who is going to make a great man, or is going to count in any way in after life, must make up his mind not merely to overcome a thousand obstacles, but to win in spite of a thousand repulses or defeats. . . . In life, as in a foot-ball game, the principle to follow is: Hit the line hard; don't foul and don't shirk, but hit the line hard!"

"There is an excellent little pamphlet, entitled *A Message to Garcia,*" says Claudius Clear. "Briefly, the story is this: When war broke out between Spain and the United States, it was very necessary to communicate with Garcia, the leader of the insurgents, who was somewhere in the mountain fastnesses of Cuba. No mail or telegraph message could reach him. Nobody knew exactly where he was, and yet he had to be found. Some one said to the president: 'There is a fellow by the name of Rowan who will find Garcia for you if anybody can.' Rowan was sent for, got the letter, started off at once, landed by night off the coast of Cuba from an open boat, disappeared into the jungle, and in three weeks came out on the other side of the island, having traversed a hostile country on foot, and delivered his letter to Garcia.

"McKinley gave Rowan a letter to be delivered to Garcia. Rowan took the letter, and did not ask: 'Where is he?' Now that is a man whose form should be cast in bronze, and the statue placed in every college in the land. This man was loyal to a trust; acted promptly, concentrated his energies, did the thing. What would the average man have done? what does he do as it is? He asks, 'Where does he live? How am I to get there? What shall I do if he will not see me?' And after all these questions have been laboriously answered, he starts out, and comes back explaining, entirely to his own satisfaction, why he has failed."

What's the Use? There's a big lot of use. Let us illustrate it by a true story which has never been published. In the dark beginnings of Civil Service reform, two young men sat in the office of the Commission at Washington and smiled grimly at the assaults and victories of the spoilsmen. They also dreamed a bit as young men sometimes do. "What a fine thing it would be if you could be Governor of New York!" said one, and the other laughed and replied, "Why not say President of the United States?" But the impossibilities did not dismay them. They looked at

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the situation and the conditions and agreed to keep on because they were right. And in the course of time the young man did become Governor of New York and he is now President of the United States, and the other fills an important legal office of the Government—appointed by President McKinley and reappointed by his friend Roosevelt. These young men came in close contact with the bosses, but instead of becoming discouraged, they saw the value of the persistence of their enemies, and they kept at it themselves. *The Saturday Evening Post.*

II. Great is Thy Faith: Be it Unto Thee Even as Thou Wilt

The Prayer of Faith is Power. Prayer is human request addressed to God; it is asking, seeking, from God. And what is it makes prayer to prevail? It is the desire and the trust of him who prays.

A wise father will not yield to every request of his child; it is impossible that he should, because he is wiser than he. His denials are often better for the child than gifts would be, they more truly bless him. But if there is some request upon which the child's heart is set, some desire cherished with great earnestness, the father will naturally desire to grant it. That earnestness will weigh with him; if he can not grant the request, it will pain him; if he can, he gladly will. And God is our Father. The human desire when it is intense, touches Him, moves Him; He will do much for it.

The other element which makes the power of prayer is trust. That you are trusted—this is a claim which you acknowledge, to which you respond. If this trust be simple, unwary, absolute, its appeal is the stronger and more commanding, and the response the more sure. The highest expression of this emotion is doubtless found in the love of the parent and the child. A child's trust is often perfect. It needs everything, and what it needs, it expects. It makes great demands, but it makes them so confidingly that its appeal is irresistible. Now if God is rightly called Father, He must feel thus. Arguing from our own highest to Him, we can understand somewhat how the element of trust may justify a preference for the person in whom that element is present, so that he may, for the sake of it, receive a blessing withheld from another in whom the trust is wanting. The prayer of faith is power. *W. W. Sidey.*

To Those of Great Faith the Promise is Fulfilled. In addressing a vast audience in Boston the brilliant negro orator, Frederick Douglass, drew a despairing picture of the fate of the slaves, and expressed a fear that the evil of slavery could never be done away with, when his sister, Sojourner Truth, cried out suddenly, "Frederick, is God dead?" She had the great faith of this Syrophenician woman, and like her, she received the fulfilment of the same promise, "Be it unto thee even as thou wilt."

So did Mary Moffat who, with Robert Moffat, labored for ten years in the heart of Africa without a single convert.

They were four hundred miles from the frontier of civilization, the only white people in a world of savages. When she received a letter from a friend in England asking what could be sent them, there seemed no prospect that they would ever reap the fruit of their labors, yet she bravely wrote back, "Send us a communion service; we shall want it some day." The service reached them three years later, the day before the first converts were baptized.

The Little Child's Faith. In the history of the fine arts we read that a little child on the streets of Florence watched for the coming of Michael Angelo, who was on the way to his studio. The child brought with it a large sheet of paper, for it intended to ask the artist to draw it a picture, and it firmly believed that he would. That was a bold faith. Angelo, the man who combined in one soul painter, sculptor, architect, and poet, was in the zenith of his glory. Popes had pleaded with him for the fruits of his genius, and kings had offered him vast sums for a single work of art. The child's faith in asking him for a picture was daring faith; but it won the day. It went right to the heart of the artist. He could not disappoint such open and sincere trust and expectation. Sitting down on the side of the street, he drew a sketch then and there, such as no other hand in all the world could have produced. That was what the child expected and believed he would do. *David Gregg.*

According to your Faith be it unto You involves a principle valid everywhere. Expectation is the first step in achievement. Confidence is a great element of success, even in a game of ball. It is unlikely we will either hit or catch a ball we expect to miss. Some one has said that Columbus practically found America before he left Spain, and so far from being surprised when he saw the Western continent, he would have been surprised if he had not seen it. The expectancy of faith is a large element in success. *Girard B. Hallock.*

III. The Power of Prayer

What Prayers Prevail. Does every prayer have power with God? By no means; for we are told that we shall receive nothing if we ask amiss. But there is an "effectual prayer that availeth much." In the Revised Version the passage is rendered, "the supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working."

By prayer, adoration, thanksgiving, confession of sin, and petition for mercies and favors, ascend to the throne, and by means of it precious blessings are brought down from Heaven. The pull of our prayers may not move the everlasting throne, but—like the pull on a line from the bow of a boat—it may draw us into closer fellowship with God, and into fuller harmony with His holy will. . . .

The prayer that has weight with God must be a prepaid prayer. If we expect a letter to reach its destination we put a stamp on it; otherwise

it goes to the dead-letter office. There is what may be called a dead-prayer office, and thousands of well-worded petitions get buried up there. All of God's promises have their conditions; we must comply with those conditions or we can't expect the blessings coupled with the promises. We must be sure that we are doing our part, if we expect God to do His part. There is a legitimate sense in which every Christian should do his utmost for the answering of his own prayers. When a certain venerable minister was called on to pray at a missionary convention, he first fumbled in his pocket, and when he had tossed a bank-note into the plate he said, "I can not pray until I have given something." He prepaid his own prayer. *Theodore L. Cuyler, in The American Friend.*

George Müller's Faith in Prayer. Marvelous is the record of the life of George Müller, a German who lived in England and died there at the age of ninety-two. His trust in God was as simple as a child's, and his belief that his prayers would be answered was never shaken. He raised in all over seven millions of dollars for religious and charitable purposes, and he never asked any one for a cent, it all came to him in answer to prayer. In 1835 he hired a house and took in thirty orphan girls to educate, when he had not a dollar on hand for their support. Eventually he established five great orphanages and educated one hundred and twenty thousand children. He printed and circulated over one hundred and seven million books and tracts in many languages, and raised vast sums for foreign missions. His prayers were answered. The money he needed from year to year all came to him by voluntary gifts.

Other Testimonies. My supplications ordinarily take the form of putting the case plainly to Him who is the source of all right, and all justice, and leaving it so. If I were to find that I could not do that, I should decline to go into the fight, or, if I had to, should feel that I was to be justly beaten. In all the years of my reporting, I have never omitted this when anything big was on foot, whether a fire, a murder, a robbery, or whatever might come in the way of duty, and I have never heard that my reports were any the worse for it. I know they were better. Perhaps the notion of a police reporter praying that he may write a good murder story may seem ludicrous, even irreverent to some people. But that is only because they fail to make out in it the human element which dignifies anything and rescues it from reproach. Unless I could go to my story that way I would not go to it at all. I am very sure that there is no irreverence in it—just the reverse. *Jacob A. Riis.*

My mother's habit was, every day, immediately after breakfast, to withdraw for an hour to her own room, and to spend that hour in reading the Bible, in meditation, and in prayer. From that hour, as from a pure fountain, she drew the strength and the sweetness which enabled her to fulfil all her duties, and to remain unruffled by all the worries and pettinesses which are so often the intolerable trial of narrow neighborhoods. As I think of her life, and of all it had to bear, I see the absolute triumph

of Christian grace in the lovely ideal of a Christian lady. I never saw her temper disturbed; I never heard her speak one word of anger, or of calumny, or one of idle gossip. I never observed in her any sign of a single sentiment unbecoming to a soul which had drunk of the river of the water of life, and which had fed upon manna in the barren wilderness. *Canon Farrar.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

They can conquer who believe they can. *Dryden.*

Tact is wisdom in contact. *Selected.*

Faith is greeting the unseen with a cheer. *Browning.*

He whom we trust has been often tested. *William T. Ellis.*

The truest wisdom is a resolute determination. *Napoleon.*

All eyes see God's benefits, but few see God. *Mark Guy Pearse.*

We should live so as to produce faith in others. *David Gregg.*

There is no substitute for thorough-going, ardent, sincere earnestness. *Dickens.*

The proof of faith is its fruit; if it bear none, it is not faith. *William T. Ellis.*

All I have seen teaches me to trust the Creator for all I have not seen. *Emerson.*

God doth justify the believing man, not for the worthiness of his faith, but for the worthiness of Him which is believed. *Richard Hooker.*

Help us to reach out past the things we can not understand, to the God we trust. *Maltbie Babcock.*

Vigilance in watching opportunity; tact and daring in seizing upon opportunity; force and persistence in crowding opportunity to its utmost of possible achievement—these are the martial virtues which must command success. *Austin Phelps.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

If the mighty works which were done in you (Bethsaida), had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. Matt. 11.21.

The trying of your faith worketh patience. James 1.3.

Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. Acts 13.46.

Men ought always to pray, and not to faint. Luke 18.1.

Pray without ceasing. 1 Thess. 5.17.

The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Jas. 5.16.

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Let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing from the Lord. Jas. 1.6, 7.

Without faith it is impossible to please him. Heb. 11.6.

I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also. 1 Cor. 14.15.

The spirit itself maketh intercession for us. Rom. 8.26.

Peter therefore was kept in prison; but praper was made without cessation of the church unto God for him. Acts 12.5.

What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. Mark 11.24.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

It is sometimes a keen trial when help is delayed. It is hard work waiting, silence is hard to bear. Let us learn from this story that silence is not refusal; that the silence that makes painful delay may yet end in the gracious words, "Be it even unto thee as thou wilt," if only the Lord can say of us, "Great is thy faith." *W. W. Sidey.*

THE LESSON SUMMARY

Withdrawing from Galilee and going into pagan country, Jesus is sought out by a Syrophenician woman who urgently beseeches Him to cast forth the devil out of her daughter. The conversation between them has been thus paraphrased by William J. Dawson:

"I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. This is what the disciples think of me and my mission. So be it; let us see how far this definition can be pressed in the presence of this woman, and her need. I will say to her what you would say, and what you would wish me to say: 'Woman, trouble me not; my charity is not for you; it is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it unto dogs!' You are not ashamed of such a sentiment; have you no shame or surprise when you hear me utter it? But let us hear what the woman herself will say to this illiberal doctrine. And with a quick glance of triumph the woman makes retort, giving back irony for irony, wit for wit. 'Truth, Lord,' she cries, 'yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' tables!' Humility can hardly sink lower, faith can hardly rise higher."

And He said unto her, "For this saying go thy way, the devil is gone out of thy daughter."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. What were the characteristics and the results of the Second Period of the Galilean Ministry?

2. This Period is sometimes called The Year of Popularity. Contrast the attitude of the people toward Jesus at the beginning and at the end of the period.

3. The opposition of the Pharisees during this year.

4. The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.

Politicians constantly teach reformers lessons—if the reformers would but learn them. Men of lesser standards who plan, persist and win, teach the men of higher standards the value of planning and persisting. It is far easier to triumph in a good cause than in a bad one. The good man always has the better prospect, but if he waits for virtue to bring its own reward or falls comfortably back on a satisfied conscience, he is going to be disappointed. He must fight for results—plan for them, persist until they come.

It is a pretty practical old world, and it is inclined to do better for the bad man who plans and persists than for the good man who asks "What's the use?" and quits. *The Saturday Evening Post.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. See if your name is in the back part of a large dictionary, and, if there, learn its meaning. 2. How does Peter's confession resemble that of Andrew in John 1.41, and how do the two differ? (Andrew, after a few hours with Jesus, enthusiastically announced that Jesus would prove to be the Messiah they were expecting. Peter, after months of living and working with Jesus, deliberately affirms that he knows Jesus to be the Messiah, although His life had differed so greatly from what he had expected.) 3. Look up the references under *Will of God, fulfilled by Christ,* in the Subject-Index of your Bible. 4. Review lesson five of the first quarter about the temptation of Jesus. Of which of the three temptations does the lesson for next Sunday remind you? 5. What do you think it means to deny oneself? 6. The principles of a Christian life are taught in verses 24-26 of our next lesson. Write down what changes you will need to make in your way of living, if you endeavor to live up to these principles. Put the paper away where you can refer to it from time to time.

BETWEEN LESSON X AND LESSON XI

Returning to the eastern side of the Lake, Jesus healed the deaf and dumb man and many others. After miraculously providing food for four thousand, He went by ship to the southeastern shore, and there the Pharisees demanded a sign from Heaven, which He refused them. He warned His disciples to beware of the leaven (doctrine) of the Pharisees. Going to Bethsaida, He restored the sight of a blind man. (Matt. 15.29–16.12; Mark 7.31-8.26.)

PETER'S GREAT CONFESSION

Matt. 16.13-28. (Read Mark 7.31-8.33.) Commit verses 24, 25.

Golden Text

Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. Matt. 16.16.

Time: Summer, A. D. 29.

Place: Near Cæsarea Philippi. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 47, 48, 118, and 119.

LESSON TEXT. MATT. 16.13–28

13 When Jesus came into the coasts of Cæsarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?

14 And they said, Some *say that thou art* John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.

15 He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?

16 And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed *it* unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

20 Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ.

21 From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.

22 Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee.

23 But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.

24 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

25 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.

26 For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

27 For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with

his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.

28 Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

16. *The Christ.* The annointed, the Messiah. *The Son of God.* Of the same substance, one with the Father. *Living.* He alone having life in Himself, "the living and true God." (John 5.26.) *Williams.*

17. *Simon Barjona.* The Aramaic word *Bar* means *Son; Barjona,* son of Jonah. Compare the English names Harrison, Robinson, Peterson. *Flesh and blood.* A Jewish synonym of "man."

18. *My church.* In the Gospels this word occurs only here and in Matt. 18.17. "It is used to translate the Hebrew word for congregation."

18. *The gates of hell.* R. V., the gates of hades. Our word *hell,* derived from the Anglo-Saxon word *helan, to hide,* originally meant the invisible world, the abode of the dead. It gradually acquired, however, its present meaning of the abode of the wicked, the place of torment, and corresponds to the Hebrew word *Gehenna.* Having no word corresponding to the Hebrew *Sheol,* the word *Hades* has been borrowed by the Revisers. *Shall not prevail.* The passage seems to mean *either,* my church shall not be swallowed up in the gates of Hades, shall not cease to exist (or possibly, shall not be overcome by its power); *or,* my people shall rise again. *Broadus.*

19. *Bind and loose.* "To bind" is to forbid, to pronounce unlawful; "to loose" is to allow, to declare lawful. "A common proverb of the day was that Shammai 'bound' (i. e., declared certain rabbinical precepts to be obligatory) and Hillel 'loosed' (denied their validity)." *Farrar.*

21. *He must go.* In order to fulfil the divine purpose. *Elders and chief priests and scribes.* The Sanhedrim.

22. *Took.* Took him apart to speak to him alone. *Be it far from thee.* Some suppose the phrase to correspond to one in Hebrew, which is an exclamation of abhorrence, nearly equivalent in sense to: *Away with that!* If it is interpreted in the Greek sense, it is equivalent to: *God be merciful to them!* May God preserve them from such an end! *Schaeffer.*

Shall not be. The double negative in the Greek is very forcible, "shall in no case be."

23. *Offence.* R. V., stumbling block. *Savourest not.* R. V., mindest not.

24. *Will.* Wishes to. *Deny himself.* As the Jews denied the Saviour (Acts 3.14), so His follower denies self, will not have self for his ruler or his aim. *Broadus.*

25. *Will save his life shall lose it . . . will lose his life shall find it.* The word *life,* and the pronoun *it* referring to that word, are used in a

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twofold sense in this seeming paradox. *His life,* natural, physical life. *It,* spiritual life.

28. *Till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.* This is a difficult saying. Some commentators refer it to the fall of Jerusalem; others, to the last judgment. A satisfactory interpretation is that of Thomas Adamson in his *Studies in the Mind of Christ.* "His kingdom did come—begin to come at least—with His resurrection, and at Pentecost. One might even say, that it had come by the time He was speaking, and daily thereafter came more clearly. 'If I, by the spirit of God cast out devils, then is the kingdom of God come upon you.' (Matt. 12.28). But at Pentecost the kingdom came, as Mark says, 'With power' (Mark 9.1). 'The kingdom coming in power, as Mark puts it, interprets for us, 'the Son of Man coming in his kingdom,' as Matthew puts it."

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

14. *John the Baptist, Elias, Jeremias.* All three personages whose return might be expected; the Baptist to continue his work cut short by Herod, Elijah to prepare the way and day of the Lord (Mal. 4.5), Jeremiah to bring back the ark (2 Maccab. 2.1-12) he had hid in a cave. *A. B. Bruce.*

We now think of Isaiah as the great prophet, because he is so often quoted in the New Testament as predicting the Messiah; but the Jews in the time of Christ reckoned Elijah and Jeremiah as foremost. *John A. Broadus.*

18. *On this rock.* The little group is standing on one of the huge rocky flanks of mighty Hermon, great boulders here and there around them; and in all probability, well in sight, some great stones cut out of the rock and made ready for use in building like those still to be seen in the neighborhood of Baalbec, to the north of Hermon, for this region was famous for its great temples. Now, when we remember that the two words our Lord uses (πέτρος and πετρα) for "rock" in our version have not precisely the same meaning—the one (πέτρος, Peter) signifying a piece of rock, a stone, the other (πετρα) suggesting rather the great bed-rock out of which these stones are cut and on which they are lying—we can understand that, while the reference is certainly in the first place to Peter himself, the main thing is the great fact just brought out that he is resting, in the strength of faith, on God as revealed in His Son. *John Monro Gibson.*

20. *Tell no man.* Until their own views of the Messianic work were greatly corrected, as the Master at once began to do, any statement by them that He was the Messiah would have done harm rather than good. *John A. Broadus.*

How unprepared even that apostle was, who had made proclamation of the Messiah, for what his confession implied, and how ignorant of

the real meaning of Israel's Messiah, appeared only too soon. *Alfred Edersheim.*

21. *From that time forth began Jesus.* The Evangelists, indeed, write it down in plain language, as fully taught them by later experience, that He was to be rejected by the rulers of Israel, slain, and to rise again the third day. And there can be as little doubt, that Christ's language (as afterwards they looked back upon it) must have clearly implied all this, as that at the time they did not fully understand it. Otherwise, they could not afterwards have been in such doubt about His death and resurrection. He was so constantly in the habit of using symbolic language, and had only lately reproved them for taking that about "the leaven" in a literal, which He had meant in a figurative sense, that it was but natural they should have regarded in the same light announcements which, in their strict literality, would seem to them well-nigh incredible. They could well understand His rejection by the scribes — a sort of figurative death, or violent suppression of His claims and doctrines, and then, after briefest period, their resurrection, as it were, but not these terrible details in their full literalness. *Alfred Edersheim.*

22. *Be it far from thee, Lord.* The friends of Martin Luther entreated him to remain at home and look out for his own safety on the evening of his departure for the Diet of Worms.

23. *Get thee behind me, Satan.* Christ recognizes the same old enemy, with the same old weapon of assault; for it is the same temptation as that which formed the climax of the conflict in the wilderness, a temptation to prosecute His work by methods which would spare Him the awful agony of the cross. *John Monro Gibson.*

Thou art not, as before, a noble block, lying in its right position as a massive foundation-stone. On the contrary, thou art like a stone quite out of its proper place, and lying right across the road in which I must go—lying as a stone of stumbling. *Morison.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

18. *The gates of hell shall not prevail against it.* The high court of Turkey is still called the "Sublime Porte," the "Exalted Gateway;" and the subjects of the Sultan seek imperial favor at his palace door. He has his representatives administer justice there, to those who are waiting at the gate.

A promise to Abraham was, "Thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies" (Gen. 22.17); and again Jesus says of His church, that "the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it." In both these cases, "gates" are obviously equivalent to the power of those who are within the gates. Thus, also, when the overthrow of a city was foretold in prophecy, it was said, that "the gate is smitten with destruction." *H. Clay Trumbull.*

19. *I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven.* It is neces-

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sary to understand the Eastern associations which help to explain our Lord's figure of the "keys." The key in the East was a symbol of authority; it was made long, with a crook at one end, so that it could be worn round the neck as a badge of office. To "confer a key" was a phrase equivalent to bestowing a situation of great trust and distinction. *R. Tuck.*

Oriental Keys.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. For three years Jesus has been teaching His disciples and the multitude, and His work in Galilee and the provinces is nearly done. The hatred of the Pharisees has increased, till now it is evident that they are bent on putting Him out of the way. The thoughts of Jesus turn more and more on His coming death, and He wishes to forewarn His disciples. He takes them with Him to Cæsarea Philippi, on His last northward journey, and near there, surrounded by the beautiful scenery of river and lake and snow-capped mountain, He has a talk with them which they never afterward forget.

"Whom do men say that I am?" He asked them, not from curiosity to know what others said about Him, for He knew that without asking, nor from pride, for pride had no place in His heart. It was to lead them on to a statement of their own thoughts about Him. What was their answer? Was it an honor to be called John the Baptist or Elijah or Jeremiah? What personal question does Jesus now ask?

For Older Pupils. In a Greek tragedy the point where the action was fully developed and the catastrophe came in sight, was called the *Peripeteia.* At this point the attention of the audience was breathless as the burden of the piece slid into their hearts. The passage of St. Mark's Gospel which is now before us might be called the Peripeteia of the story. The solemn significance of it is only hidden from our eyes because we always set out to read it with the conclusion or the discovery already in our minds. But let us turn back for a moment and observe what the action of the drama has been.

Jesus came from Nazareth to the Jordan, and at the baptism He became distinctly aware of the heavenly mission on which He had been sent. He

then proceeded to gather about Him a few friends who might, as it were, see Him and judge for themselves. . . . All along, by His teaching of the multitude, by His deeds of mercy, by the hours of solitary communion when He called His disciples apart for a while, His one object evidently had been to touch their consciences, to open their eyes, that they might of their own accord perceive who He was.

Now at last, the crisis had come, where the little circle of "His own" obtained at last a clear perception of one stupendous fact. Peter's confession in our lesson, "Thou art the Christ," is the center and the pivot of the whole story. Everything has led up to this from the opening verse. This is the summit, the transfiguration follows, and from the summit, He leads His disciples down into the valley of shadows and death. *R. F. Horton.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. What Think ye of Christ?

Confession Confirms Faith. It is one thing to suspect a truth within and even to be certain of it; it is another to commit one's self openly to it. Simon had come near to the conviction that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God. Perhaps he had not wholly settled down upon it until the very moment. It was Jesus, and not Simon, who declared that the view to which Simon now committed himself was the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Simon was not aware of having reached this opinion in any unusual way. He just felt it, and, with or without any hesitation or timidity, he burst out with it. How much this must have meant to Simon, similar experiences in our lives have taught us. *Robert E. Speer, in Sunday School Times.*

The Answer of History. You can explain a pool of water in the streets outside by a February shower, but not so the Canadian lakes. Effects imply such causes as are adequate to produce them. Who was Christ that He should have done so much as history says He has done? A young Man steps out of a carpenter's shop in a village of no high reputation in Galilee, and suddenly announces Himself as the Son of God, and summons all, low and high, educated and ignorant, to accept Him as the guide and ruler of their lives. He proceeds to issue a few simple injunctions for the regulation of conduct, or what is more startling, for the regulation of the thoughts and feelings of every one, to forgive the sins of one after another, to warn all who disbelieve Him, to speak most solemnly of the punishment awaiting those who do not cherish His spirit and follow Him as the Judge of all nations. And a few people listen and enroll themselves amongst His band and carry forward His message. Some are quite ready to die in defense of it. And as the centuries grow, the few increase until, in our day, they have reached a mighty, numberless multitude. *William Watson.*

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Christ the Perfect Man. Three objects, partly natural and partly architectural, I have seen, which meet the reasonable expectation aroused by the descriptions of travelers: the Alhambra, in Granada, Spain; the Japanese Sea; and the glorious Taj Mahal in Agra, India. Three products of literary skill have I read, each almost perfect of its kind,—Shakespeare's *Hamlet,* Milton's *Paradise Lost,* and Tennyson's *In Memoriam.* Three men have I studied, magnificent, majestic, and well nigh matchless—Moses, the lawgiver, Paul, the Apostle, and Luther, the Reformer. . . .

But the ideal man has not yet been discovered among those who are mere men. No one of our noblest men was a spotless sun; no one reached sinless perfection. From all our loftiest specimens of manhood, I turn dissatisfied to Jesus Christ, and in Him I find the one ideal become actual, the dream real, and the hope fruition. What the Himalaya range, the most elevated and stupendous mountain system on the globe, sweeping across historic lands as far as from New York to Chicago and back to New York, and rising so high that the superb Matterhorn, if lifted bodily and placed upon the Jungfrau, would not reach its glittering heights, is to all the mountain ranges of the earth, that and more Jesus Christ is to the long lines of men who have risen highest in moral grandeur in the history of the human race. Jesus Christ is the loftiest specimen of manhood the race has produced; He is the fullest manifestation of divinity God has given the world. *Robert Stuart MacArthur.*

II. Let Him Deny Himself and Follow me

Christ Calls for the Surrender of Self-will. It is one thing for a man to *deny* himself, and a very different thing for a man to deny *himself.* No one wins success of any sort without some measure of self-denial. The champion of the prize-ring has denied himself many things; and has sacrificed his intellectual and spiritual growth to his physical development. But this is not Christian self-sacrifice. Nor is the sacrifice of every natural inclination and the crucifixion of every noble desire in order to acquire wealth any more Christian. In each case one part of the man has been denied for the sake of another part. He has not denied *himself,* but only a fraction of himself. It is self-abnegation of which Christ is speaking. It is the death of self-will which He demands. *Josiah Strong.*

Saying versus Doing. "Master, we will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest," we think we can say, but when the service called for involves some real sacrifice, we find we are far from willing. A teacher in a training home for boys in Palestine, talked to the boys about the joy of giving rather than receiving at Christmas, and asked them what they had to give away. A small boy replied glibly "My heart to God." To ascertain how much the boy meant by this answer, the teacher said to him,

"Yes, that is very well, but will you give your knife to some boy who hasn't any?" The boy hung his head at this question, and had no answer ready.

The Denial and the Reward. Prescott in his History tells that Pizarro, in his earlier attempts to conquer Peru, found that his followers were about to desert him. He drew his sword and traced with it a line from East to West. Then, turning towards the South, he said, "Friends, and comrades, on that side are toil, hunger, nakedness, the drenching storm, desertion and death; on this side, ease and pleasure. There lies Peru with all its riches; here Panama and its poverty. Choose, each man, as becomes a brave Castilian. For my part, I go South." So saying, he stepped across the line. One after another his comrades followed him, thus pledging themselves to brave whatever might come.

So Jesus points out two paths, one a path of seeming pleasure and selfish gratification that leads to final ruin; the other a path of hardship and self-denial, that leads to life eternal.

Follow Me. Christian life is simple. It is summed up in one thing —"Follow me." Day before yesterday as I got out of the elevated train at Hanover Square, I looked down upon the street far below, and a thought something like this went through my mind: supposing that, without any knowledge of the existence and mode of working of an elevated railway, I had been placed on this train while asleep or unconscious, and had awakened at this station, and been told that I must get down to that street. I get out of the train and find myself on a narrow platform. I look down on either side, and say, "No way down there, except by being dashed to pieces." Instinctively I follow those in front of me. Steps, but the door is shut: no getting down there. I follow still. A door, but it opens into an enclosure. I follow still. Another door, and there are steps which lead me safely and easily down to the street. I might have stood still, and distracted myself with a dozen devices for getting down. I might have gone bustling about looking for a rope or a ladder. There was only one thing needful, and that was, to follow those who knew the way. So in our Christian experience, one thing is needful, to hear Jesus' words, and follow Him. *Marvin R. Vincent.*

III. Profit and Loss

The Magic Skin. Balzac has given us an allegory in three books called *The Magic Skin,* that forcibly illustrates this question of Jesus, What shall a man give in exchange for his soul? The story opens with a young Paris student, Raphael by name, who loses his last gold piece in a gambling den, and walks away thinking only of death, thinking how the Prefect of the Seine will give the boatman a five-franc piece for finding his body. Night, after all, is a better time in which to die, and he enters an antiquarian shop. There he is attracted to a skin on which is written in Arabic:

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" Dost thou desire me? Take me.
God will grant thee thy wishes,
But at every wish of thine I shrink
And with me thy days."

Raphael signs a compact and departs with the piece of leather. His first wish is to indulge in some wild orgy. He seeks a place of revelry, and the next day he sees with a start that the magic skin has already shriveled a little.

He falls in love with a young woman whom he can gain only through possessing great wealth.

"To the devil with death!" he exclaims at last, brandishing the magic skin, "I choose to live, and to be rich, to win Fedora. Never will she be won till I am rich. I wish for two hundred thousand francs a year!" Soon afterward he learns that his uncle has died and left him six million francs. He spreads out his magic skin on the table and measures it, and it is much smaller.

He tries to destroy the fatal leather. It is untouched by chemical reagents, comes out of a white-hot furnace unsinged, is thrown into the bottom of a deep well, but is drawn up in the bucket. Raphael measures it anew and it is now only six inches square.

He then strives to live without wishing, but his evil nature has gained too strong a hold on him, his will power is gone. Excess has unnerved him. The magic talisman is hung upon the wall, and as he watches it shrink and shrink, his own life ebbs away, physicians avail not, and at last the end comes to him and at the same time the remnant of leather vanishes into nothingness.

The old proverb says, "It is not worth while to kill yourself to keep yourself." Do you not recognize in the "magic skin" the greed for gold, the pursuit of pleasure, the self-indulgence, the attempt to gain the whole world, and all at the expense of one's soul? How small the profit, how immeasurably great the loss!

What is Worth While. A student in a famous Italian University came to Philip de Neri, a saint of the sixteenth century, to tell him that he had entered a law school and was going to become a wonderful lawyer.

"Well," said his friend, "when you have finished this course of study, what do you mean to do?"

"Then I shall take my doctor's degree," said the young man.

"And then?"

"And then I shall have a number of difficult questions to manage, and shall catch people's notice by my eloquence, my learning, and my acuteness, and gain great reputation."

"And then?" repeated Philip.

"And then, why there can be no question but that I shall be promoted to some high office, and shall make money and shall grow rich."

"And then?" said Philip.
"And then, then, I shall be comfortable with wealth and dignity."
"And then?" once more questioned Philip.
"And then, then—then I shall die."
"And what then?" was Philip's persistent question.
The young man cast down his eyes and left him.

SENTENCE SERMONS

Peter's confession was a milestone in his spiritual progress.

We must not only give up sin, we must give up self.

If you wish to nourish faith, speak it. *Maclaren.*

The cross, if rightly borne, shall be
No burden, but support to thee. *Whittier.*

Peter needed to be very much tumbled up and down. *Bunyan.*

Soft and indulgent sentiment, while seeming kind, may become the very snare of the destroyer. *G. A. Chadwick.*

So possible is it to fall from seeming heights to doleful depths! *Maclaren.*

Whatever price you pay for the world, you leave the world behind you when you pass the gate of death. *Marvin R. Vincent.*

Let us put ourselves to school with Christ, as those first disciples did, and suffer Him to make His own impression upon us. *George Jackson.*

It is possible for men to have good thoughts of Christ and yet not right ones, a high opinion of Him and yet not high enough. *Matthew Henry.*

The perfect moral oneness of His humanity with the Living Father makes the Man Christ Jesus unique in our race, and is the secret of the power that rested upon Him. *T. H. Wright.*

Let our Lord's hand square us, and hammer us, and strike off the knots of pride, self-love, and world-worship, that He may make us stones and pillars in His Father's house. *Samuel Rutherford.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

And (Jesus) needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man. John 2.25.

The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust. Psa. 18.2.

Ye also as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house. 1 Pet. 2.5.

Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. 3.11.

Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone. Eph. 2.20.

The key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open. Isaiah 22.22.

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Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. 1 John 4.15.

Blessed are your eyes, for they see. Matt. 13.16.

Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way. Rom. 14.13.

He that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me is not worthy of me. Matt. 10.38.

I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death. Rev. 1.18.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Looking steadily at my great Master to-day, I would ask myself what kind of Christ He is to me. I would ask what kind of witness I am to Him when He calls for my testimony to Him, and asks whether that testimony is borne by my lips alone, or by my life as well. What dost thou say I am to thee? and how art thou saying it? Dost thou say it secretly, as if it were a thing of which thou art half ashamed? or dost thou say it openly, with the joyous tone of one who glories in confessing it? Does thy whole life say, and say unmistakably, "This Christ is my Redeemer and my King"? *G. H. Knight.*

THE LESSON SUMMARY

The rejection of Christ by "His own" is now complete. All things point toward His early sacrificial death; He is even now walking in the valley of the shadow. Can He depend on His disciples? Beyond His own land, in the region of Cæsarea Philippi, He questions them. He has waited patiently till the conviction of His divinity should come to them. He would not have them believe this from what John the Baptist or any one else might say about Him, nor yet from His own words; has the time come when they of themselves have grasped the great thought, on which the growth of the kingdom depends? Have the months of living and working with Him dispelled their preconceived ideas of what a Messiah's career would be like? Leading up by questions about what others think of Him, He suddenly puts the momentous personal question, "Whom say ye that I am?" Peter speaks for them all. "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Sure and true rings the answer, and warm and strong is Christ's commendation.

Firmly grounded in this faith, they can now bear the plain revelation of His approaching death, which He at once begins to disclose to them. Impulsive Peter can not endure the thought of any harm coming to his Master, and presumptuously rebukes Him, exclaiming, "Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee."

Verily, Peter has need of Christ's severe condemnation to teach him his place.

The first great truth—Jesus is the Messiah—the disciples have learned. The second and third great truths—Jesus must suffer; His followers must deny themselves, take up their cross, and thus gain eternal life—these they have yet to learn in the coming sorrowful weeks.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The heights and the depths in man.

2. It is a great clarifier of opinions to put them into words.

3. None are more formidable instruments of temptation than well-meaning friends, who care more for our comfort than for our character. *A. B. Bruce.*

4. Some modern thoughts concerning Christ: (1) It must be admitted that there are men in every community who have no definite convictions regarding Jesus the Christ. (2) Jesus Christ is a great historic character. (3) There are those who think of Christ as a dreamy, poetic character. (4) There are many who earnestly affirm that Jesus Christ is the ideal man of the human race. (5) The character of Jesus Christ is wholly inexplicable on human principles. *Channing.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. What is the meaning of the word *Transfiguration?* 2. Describe the Transfiguration scene. 3. Why was Peter's remark a foolish one? 4. In what lesson of the first quarter were the words of verse 35 heard? (Jan. 28.) 5. On what other occasion was God's presence made known to the Israelites by a cloud? (Exod. 24.15-17; 34:5; 40.34-38.) 6. Tell the story of the Transfiguration of Moses. (Exod. 34:28-35.) 7. How was Moses buried? (Deut. 34.5-6.) How did Elijah leave the earth? (2 Kings 2.11.) 8. Tell the story of the transfiguration of Stephen. (Acts 6.9-15.) 9. Read Peter's recollection years afterwards of the Transfiguration of Christ. (2 Pet. 1.16-18). 10. On what other occasions were these three disciples the only disciples permitted to remain with Jesus? (Mark 5.35-43; Mark 14.32-42.) 11. Tell what happened when Jesus and His three disciples came down the mountain. (Mark 9.14-29.) Why has this scene been called the "Transfiguration in the valley"?

BETWEEN LESSON XI AND LESSON XII

There is no record of any event or teaching of Jesus in the week that elapsed between Peter's confession and the Transfiguration. It is natural to suppose that Jesus' Messiahship, and Jesus' sufferings, were the themes still discussed.

THE TRANSFIGURATION

Luke 9.28-36. (Read Matt. 17.1-13; Mark 9.2-13.) Commit vv. 30, 31.

Golden Text

This is my beloved son:
Hear Him. Luke 9.35.

Time: Summer, A. D. 29.
Place: Mount Hermon. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 47 and 49–53.

LESSON TEXT. LUKE 9.28–36

28 And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray.
29 And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment *was* white *and* glistering.
30 And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias:
31 Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.
32 But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him.
33 And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said.
34 While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud.
35 And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him.
36 And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone. And they kept *it* close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

28. *After these sayings.* Of our last lesson. *A mountain.* R. V., *the* mountain. Probably Mount Hermon.

31. *His decease.* His exodus. The word *decease,* derived from the Latin *decessus,* means *a going from.* "The true meaning of the word is not death, as cessation of being, but a going out, or liberation of life." *He should accomplish.* R. V. *He is about to fulfil.*

36. *Jesus was found alone.* Matthew adds, "Jesus came and touched them, and said, 'Arise, and be not afraid.'" *Told no man in those days.* The inference is that after the resurrection they told this wonderful experience.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

28. *He took Peter, James and John.* What men, from among the first apostles, reign to-day as do these men? James, ever supreme among the apostles, as having been first of their number to receive the crown of martyrdom; John, in inspired writing, unveiled the wonders of His commandments and His love, His light and His life, and the whole Church, in its mystic relationship to Christ, is under the sway of the apostle of love; Peter held the keys, and, in Pentecostal preaching, opened the door of the kingdom to Jews and Gentiles, first at Jerusalem and then in the house of Cornelius. *G. Campbell Morgan.*

28. *Went up into a mountain to pray.* It seems probable that the idea was to spend the night in prayer. We know that this was a not infrequent custom with Him; and if ever there seemed a call for it, it must have been now, when He was about to begin that sorrowful journey which led to Calvary. With this thought agree all the indications which suggest that it was evening when they ascended, night while they remained on the top, and morning when they came down. This, too, will account in the most natural manner for the drowsiness of the apostles; and the fact that their Lord felt none of it, only proved how much more vivid was His realization of the awfulness of the crisis than theirs was. We are to think of the four, then, as slowly and thoughtfully climbing the hill at eventide, carrying their *abbas,* or rugs, on which they would kneel for prayers, and which, if they needed rest, they would wrap around them, as is the oriental custom. By the time they reached the top, night would have cast its veil of mystery on the grandeur of the mountains round about them; while snowy Hermon in the gloom would rise like a mighty giant to Heaven, its summit "visited all night by troops of stars." Never before nor since has there been such a prayer-meeting on this earth of ours. *John Monro Gibson, Expositors' Bible.*

30. *Moses and Elias.* Moses the founder, who had received the law and given it to the people; Elijah, the prophet, who had called the people back to their allegiance to the law. The disciples recognized them, and they must have known each other. Does not this tell us that individuality is not lost in that world of the unseen?

Doctor Burton, in *The Expositors' Bible,* says: When they appeared upon the Mount of Transfiguration, Moses and Elias had been residents of the other world, the one for nine, the other for fourteen centuries. But while possessing the form, and perhaps the features of the old body of earth, the glorious body they wear now is under condi-

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tions and laws altogether different. How easy and aerial are its movements! Though it possesses no wings, it has the lightness and buoyancy of a bird, moving through space swiftly and silently, as the light pulses through the ether. . . . It is raised a spiritual body (1 Cor. 15.44). It is no longer the "natural body," but a supernatural one, with a spiritual instead of a material form, and under spiritual laws."

33. *Not knowing what he said.* The words are incoherent, but they are quite natural from one who has so impulsively begun to speak that now he must talk on, because he knows not how to stop. They are the words of the very Peter whose actions we know so well. As he formerly walked upon the Sea, before considering how boisterous were the waves, and would soon afterwards smite with the sword, and risk himself in the High Priest's palace, without seeing his way through either adventure, exactly so, in this bewildering presence, he ventures into a sentence without knowing how to close it. *G. A. Chadwick.*

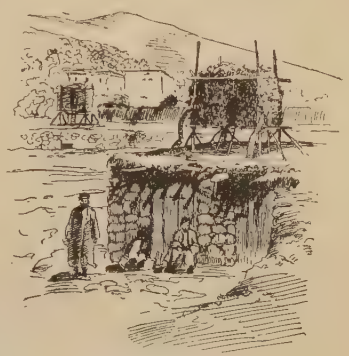
33. *It is good to be here.* "Be it far from thee, Lord," he had said in sight of the cross. "It is good to be here," he said in the light of glory. The cross? No. The glory? Yes. It was as though he had said: Suffering and passion and blood and death, I can not look upon. This glory is what I crave for thee, my Lord and Master. It was still the speech of love, blind and blundering, but yet love. It seemed as though the Master said in effect: I spoke to you of the cross, and you were afraid. I spoke also of resurrection, and you did not hear, but come with Me into a mountain apart, and in its light and glory My converse shall be still of the cross. *G. Campbell Morgan.*

35. *This is my beloved son.* Surely we can not fail to see the purpose of this marvelous event. It was to uplift and cheer the soul of Jesus with the thought of the glory into which He should return by the sorrowful way of the cross. It was a foretaste of the exceeding great reward of His sacrificial love. It was a touch of the joy of Heaven to help Him bear the sufferings of earth. And it was an assurance of the sympathy of the celestial world with His great purpose of sacrifice and death. His disciples did not yet understand this purpose. They could not talk with Him about it in any such way as to help Him. They could only protest against it, and strive to restrain Him. But the saints in glory understood what He was doing. They bent from Heaven to follow with loving, wondering eyes His steadfast journeyings towards the cross; and when they were permitted to speak with Him, they talked of that great, world-redeeming death from which His flesh shrank, but for which His divine heart was ready and longing. *Henry van Dyke.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

33. *Let us make three tabernacles.* They proposed to do what

any Galilean peasant would do to-day, if arrested by nightfall on a bleak and exposed hillside. He would at once, rather than travel in the night, look out for brushwood and rushes, and quickly weave a few loose rough hurdles, to form a screen from the wind. *Tristram.*



A Booth or Tabernacle

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Who does not want to be beautiful? There is a beauty of face which comes from perfection of features and delicacy of coloring, and there is another beauty which comes from goodness of heart. Which do you think will last the longer?

"Beautiful thoughts make a beautiful soul,
And a beautiful soul makes a beautiful face."

Who has seen a copy of Da Vinci's painting, *The Last Supper?* Have you heard the story of how, after he had completed the portraits of the eleven disciples, he waited long for models of Christ and Judas? One day he saw a young man singing in the choir of Milan cathedral. "There is my model for Christ," thought he, and soon this young man was sitting to him for the portrait of the Saviour. Long then did he search among the haunts of crime for a satisfactory model for Judas At last in Rome, in a prison cell, he found and sketched the face he had been seeking. Afterwards, he learned that this was the same man who had posed for the strong, gentle face of Jesus! Ten years of sin had utterly changed his face.

To only three disciples was it granted to see Jesus when His face was transfigured and glorified.

For Older Pupils. *After these sayings* are the words with which our lesson text begins. What sayings? Those we studied last Sunday. What was Peter's confession? What was Christ's subsequent revelation? "After these sayings is the key which unlocks the whole meaning and mystery of the Transfiguration," says Henry Burton in the *Expositors' Bible.* "Christ's revelation shattered their bright dreams at once. Like some fearful nightmare, the foreshadowing of the cross fell upon their hearts, filling them with fear, and gloom, and striking down hope and courage, yea, even faith itself. It would almost seem as if the disciples were unnerved, paralyzed by the blow, and as if an atrophy had stolen over their hearts and lives alike; for the next six days are one void of silence, without word or deed, as far as records show. How shall their lost hope be recalled, or courage

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be revived? How shall they be taught that death does not end all—that the enigma was true of Himself, as well as of them, that He shall find His life by losing it? The transfiguration is the answer."

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. Transfigured Faces

Our Faces May Shine with Reflected Light. After Moses had been with God on the Mount his face shone with so bright a glory that till the brightness began to fade away men could not look on him. When Stephen spoke so eloquently before the council at Jerusalem in behalf of his Master's cause, "he looked up steadfastly into Heaven and saw the glory of God," and those that beheld him bore witness that they "saw his face as it had been the face of an angel."

Doctor Maclaren in commenting on the transfigured face of Christ, says: "That altered fashion of countenance may stand as a symbol of the power of communion with God to breathe new beauty into our earthly life, and we, too, may have the 'glory of God' reflected on our faces as on Stephen's, if we steadfastly look up into Heaven. Only in his case, and in ours, the glory is reflected from above, and in Christ's case it came from within. . . . Let us keep near Him in the secret place that our faces may shine with reflected luster, and then come down into the camp to let our light so shine that men may glorify the Uncreated Light at which it was kindled."

If I covet one high grace,
It is this—upon my face
Just to show an inner light
To illumine others' night.

Give me such a look—so high—
That the saddest passer-by,
On a sudden glad, shall say,
"Somewhere shines the sun today!"

Anna Burnham Bryant.

The Faces of the Welsh Miners. In describing a meeting held during the recent Welsh revival, the Reverend G. Campbell Morgan said: "If you could but for once have seen the men, evidently colliers, with the blue seam that told of their work on their faces, clean and beautiful! Beautiful, did I say? Many of them lit with Heaven's own light, radiant with 'the light that never was, on sea or land.' Great, rough, magnificent, poetic men by nature, but the nature had slumbered long. To-day it was awakened, and I looked on many a face, and I knew that men did not see me, did not see Evan Roberts, but they saw the face of God and the eternities."

An Evil Face Transformed. Valentine Burke, who had been a burglar for twenty years, was converted, while in prison, by reading one of Mr. Moody's sermons. For a long time after his release from prison he could get no work, for his sins had left their mark on his face and people would not trust him. Mr. Moody has told the story of how the poor fellow prayed to God to make him a better-looking man so that he could get an honest job. In proof that his prayer was answered, Mr. Moody showed two pictures, one of the man in prison, and the other after he had become an active Christian worker. When Burke became a deputy sheriff in St. Louis, Mr. Moody went to see him and found him guarding a bag of diamonds valued at sixty thousand dollars. "See what the grace of God can do for a burglar," said he to Mr. Moody. "The sheriff, who knew my past record, picked me out of his force to guard it."

II. It is Good to be Here

How to Decide Some Troublesome Questions. The question of the right or wrong of certain actions can not always be settled by asking ourselves, Is it a sin to do this? Oftentimes we should rather ask ourselves in regard to pleasures, duties, or sacrifices, Is it helpful to me, does it bring me nearer to Christ or farther away from Him, is it good for me to be here? Is it right to go to the theater, is it right to go to this or that theater? The Reverend Mr. Morgan said he was often asked this question while in this country, but he always refused to answer it. "I always say, go home, shut the door against the world and ask Jesus Christ. I am not going to decide that question for any one. If any one comes to me and asks me if I can go, I can tell him, but I can not answer that question for others." The question for each one is, What is its effect on me? Does it stimulate in me what is good or what is bad? Do I feel while there that it is good for me to be there?

Questionable Places. I remember once arriving from the Continent at a London station, and when I got out of the carriage encountering a crowd so dense that it was impossible to push one's way through. I never had seen such a crowd before. Well-dressed it was; well-fed and rubicund, and yet with such an air of blackguardism—unmistakable blackguardism—as made me shiver. I could not identify it in the least. The women were even more evil looking than the men. When I inquired, I discovered that it consisted of the racing and betting fraternity of London, on their way to some event of the turf. I have never had any doubt since in my own mind about the character of this amusement that is carried on in the actual state of society.

There is almost no amusement for which a case can not be made out if you discuss it as an abstraction, apart from all the auxiliaries with which you find it surrounded in actual life. But to discuss anything in that way is childish. It is only throwing dust in your own eyes, because

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amusements are played not in the air but on the earth, and if an amusement is, even though it be temporarily, so inextricably associated with evil that you can hardly touch it without being defiled, surely it is better to keep away from it.

In Professor Drummond's biography, it is mentioned that once when he was carrying on a special mission for school-boys in Edinburgh, a foot-ball team belonging to one of the public schools, the members of which had come strongly under the influence of the meetings, was playing one Saturday against an opposing team, the members of which, when they were likely to be beaten, began to indulge in profane language; whereupon they promptly stopped playing and said that if this were further continued they would not continue the game, and would moreover score the name of their opponents off the list of the clubs against which they played. The protest was perfectly effectual, and the game was terminated in decency. *James Stalker.*

A Test. If your heart swells, your cheeks glow, and you wish all your best friends were with you, you are all right. Stay right where you are. But if your eyelids drop down, if you take a sneaking look around to see if there is any one there who knows you, you had better get out of that place as fast as you can. When you were down in the old swimming-hole, or up in the tall chestnut-tree, or running down from first to second base on Saturday afternoon, you felt all right—didn't you? But when you sneaked off into the hayloft and began playing cards for money, or stole off to see a "cock-fight," and kept jumping and dodging every minute for fear your father or your mother would catch you, do you mean to tell me that it "was good for you to be there"? What were those feelings for but signals that God gave you that you were in the wrong place? *Charles Frederick Goss, in Sunday School Times.*

III. Spirituality Leads to Service

The Delectable Mountain. How often we have felt like Peter. How often we have longed to escape from the turmoil and temptation of this evil world, and dwell in some calm and lofty region of religious ecstasy, holding unbroken communion with God! This is the feeling that has often withdrawn the purest men and women from their duties in the working world to spend their lives in secret contemplation amid the quietude of convents and monasteries. I suppose Bunyan's Pilgrim would gladly have stayed in the House Beautiful. I suppose he hated to go down from the Delectable Mountains. But he had to go. The only way to the heavenly city led through the rough valley and over the weary plain. . . .

With some people the favorite hymn is:

"My willing soul would stay
In such a frame as this,

And sit and sing myself away,
To everlasting bliss."

But no one ever got to everlasting bliss by that method. The world has small need of a religion which consists solely or chiefly of emotions and raptures. But the religion that follows Jesus Christ, alike when He goes up into the high mountain to pray and when He comes down into the dark valley to work; the religion that listens to Him, alike when He tells us of the peace and joy of the Father's house and when He calls us to feed His lambs; the religion that is willing to suffer as well as to enjoy, to labor as well as to triumph; the religion that has a soul to worship God and a heart to love man, and a hand to help in every good cause—is pure and undefiled. *Henry van Dyke.*

What Have You Done. Kipling in *Tomlinson* says:

And they came to the gate within the wall, where Peter holds the keys.
"Stand up, stand up, now, Tomlinson, and answer loud and high
The good that ye did for the sake of men, or ever ye came to die—
The good that ye did for the sake of men in little earth so lone!"
And the naked soul of Tomlinson grew white as a rain-washed bone.
"This I have read in a book," he said, "and that was told to me,
And this I have thought that another man thought of a prince in Muscovy."
And Peter twirled the jangling keys in weariness and wrath.
"Ye have read, ye have heard, ye have thought," he said, "and the tale is yet to run;
By the worth of the body that once ye had, give answer, What ha' ye *done?*"

The Lesson Learned at Oberammergau. "What most impressed you at Oberammergau?" was asked of a returned tourist recently.

"It was Anna Flünger, who took the part of Mary, the mother of Jesus. The only remarkable thing about it was that she was just as simple and unaffected as we might have expected any young woman of the village to be, though hers was the part which the young women of Oberammergau count worthy a life's ambition, and the greatest honor that can come to one of them in ten years, and but once to one.

"Saturday night she served us at table, and Sunday morning she served our simple breakfast, all as if unconscious that in an hour she would be the heroine in that sublime drama. I could not help wondering how many American girls would have done so, even on so much smaller an occasion as their graduation."

"And did it seem inappropriate?" asked his friend.

"Not at all. Indeed, that was the most interesting thing about it. It was more than interesting; it was a sort of revelation of the spirit of Christian service. Would not Mary, the mother of Jesus, have done the same? I could not help thinking that she would, and in much the same

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way. And then I could not help reflecting that Christ Himself was among us as one that serveth." *Youth's Companion.*

In his chamber all alone,
Kneeling on the floor of stone,
Prayed the Monk in deep contrition
For his sins of indecision.
Suddenly, as if it lightened,
An unwonted splendor brightened
All within him and without him
In that narrow cell of stone;
And he saw the Blessed Vision
Of our Lord, with light Elysian
Like a vesture wrapped about him,
Like a garment round Him thrown.
Then amid his exaltation,
Loud the convent bell, appalling,
From its belfry calling, calling,
Rang through court and corridor.
Should he go or should he stay?
Should he leave the poor to wait
Hungry at the convent gate,
Till the Vision passed away?
Should he slight his radiant guest,
Slight this visitant celestial,
For a crowd of ragged, bestial
Beggars at the convent gate?
Then a voice within his breast
Whispered, audible and clear
As if to the outward ear:
"Do thy duty; that is best;
Leave unto thy Lord the rest!"
At length, with hurried pace,
Towards his cell he turned his face,
And beheld the convent bright
With a supernatural light.
For the Vision still was standing
As he left it there before,
It had waited his return,
And he felt his bosom burn,
Comprehending all the meaning,
When the Blessed Vision said,
"Hadst thou stayed, I must have fled!"

Longfellow, from The Legend Beautiful.

SENTENCE SERMONS

Feelings should be transmuted into action.

To be good is the mother of to do good. *Selected.*

From the Mount of Crowning Jesus went to the Mount of Crucifixion.

A Christian ought to wear the kind of face that would be worth going two blocks to see. *Moody.*

Charcoal has diamond capabilities; human nature has those of transfiguration. *H. W. Warren.*

Christ's glory was manifested in His birth, His life, His transfiguration, His death, His ascension.

Remember, that in this world, every mountain top of privilege is girdled by the vales of lowly duty. *Van Dyke.*

Remember that the transfiguration of the soul is but the preparation and encouragement for the sacrifice of the life. *Van Dyke.*

> How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
> To rust unburnished, not to shine in use!
> As tho' to breathe were life. *Homer.*

Mental brightness makes facial illumination: moral obliquity dulls and deadens the features. *Selected.*

To be good and do good are the two objects set before the Christian—to develop a perfect character by rendering a perfect service: true Christian culture leads to and expresses itself in service, while faithful and long service is the very best means of Christian culture. *Washington Gladden.*

> The lives that seem so poor, so low,
> The hearts which are so cramped and dull,
> The baffled hopes, the impulse slow,
> Thou takest, touchest all, and lo!
> They blossom to the beautiful. *Susan Coolidge.*

A new light in our heart makes an occasion; but an occasion is an opportunity, not for building a tabernacle, and feeling thankful, and looking back to a blessed memory, but for shedding the new light on the old path, and doing old duties with new inspiration: the uncommon life is the child of the common day, lived in an uncommon way. *Malthie D. Babcock.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father. John 1.14.

For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. 2 Pet. 1.17.

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His countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. Rev. 1.16.

None of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. Rom. 14.7.

Let the beauty of the Lord be upon us. Psa. 90.17.

When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Col. 3.4.

Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. 1 John 3.2.

For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 2 Cor. 4.6.

We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord. 2 Cor. 3.18.

Be ye not conformed to this world: but be ye transfigured by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. Rom. 12.2.

His countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. Rev. 1.16,

And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever. Dan. 12.3.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

By a happy accident the very last word flashed along the first electric wire that was laid between England and America was "Forward." And this is the first and last word of the Master to those who believe. Don't stand weeping overlong about the sinful past. Don't be overmuch taken up with present joys. Redeem the time. Use the hours as they pass. Forget that which is behind. Reach forth to that which is before. Live so that each to-morrow finds you further than to-day. *Samuel Cox.*

THE LESSON SUMMARY

The whole scene of the Transfiguration has its significance in the strengthening of the faith of the three disciples, and as an overwhelming expression to Christ of His divine Sonship. It was while He was praying that His face was altered. "The glorified, beatific face of their Master, lighted from within, with a radiance so transcendent that even His faded garments glistened as the light, the revered visitants from the world of departed spirits, who returned to earth again after centuries of absence, the enveloping cloud that covered them all with brightness, as, awe-stricken, speechless, they waited, with bated breath, under its glorious overshadowing, the divine Voice—all must have left an impress upon memory never to be lost."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Whenever we make a grateful review, let it mean instant commitment to a better future. If the mercies of God have blessedly beset us, let us not build "three tabernacles" that we may abide, but rather, like Paul, call the places where our mercies meet us, "three Taverns" and thank God and take courage. Every attainment is to be a footing for new attempts, and every goal, a point of departure.

> "A man's reach should exceed his grasp,
> Or what's a Heaven for?"
>
> *Editorial in Sunday School Times.*

2. Peter suggests making a tabernacle for Jesus, one for Moses, and one for Elijah, thus putting His Master on the same level with these men of the past. The mistake is by no means an obsolete one. Men are still attempting to make tabernacles, one for Christ, one for Confucius, and one for Buddha. It is ever dangerous to allow that it is possible for a moment to put the best of religious teachers in comparison with the Christ. *G. Campbell Morgan.*

3. It is not too much to say that the church of to-day resembles to a certain degree the monk of Longfellow's *Legend Beautiful.* We seem to be called upon to turn our backs on Heavenly visions in order that we may minister to the needs of men. Of religion in the form of service we hear ever more and more. Like the pious monk, we have stayed; but unlike him, perhaps, we have not yet learned how service rendered to Christ's brethren, instead of removing Heavenly visions, may actually prolong them. *George Albert Coe.*

4. Our King's law of self-denial is not asceticism for its own sake. It was morbid asceticism which Saint Stylites exhibited when, in the spirit of ostentatious humility and self-denial, he lived exposed to all vicissitudes of weather, day and night, summer and winter, for thirty years on the top of a column sixty feet high and four feet thick. It is self-denial for the sake of moral discipline or rectification of personal character that He teaches. *George Dana Boardman.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Bring to class *Part II* of your *Life of Christ,* which you have been preparing during the Quarter.

(Assign work upon whatever plan has been selected for next Sunday's Review Lesson.)

REVIEW

Spring, A. D. 28—Summer, A. D. 29.

Golden Text

Never man spake like this man. John 7.46.
(Never man so spake—Revised Version)

Authority of Christ's Words. While digging in some ruins in Egypt a few years ago, two men came across a small piece of papyrus about the size of half a sheet of note paper. There were seven sentences upon the papyrus, and about half of the words are not found in the Gospels. They were thought to be the words of Christ, and at once they were published in newspapers and magazines, and learned men throughout the world have discussed them and written about them. No words of any man could have created the interest that these words of Christ aroused.

What is the secret of authoritative speech? Is it not the belief of the speaker, the profound conviction of the truth of what he is saying which shines forth in his face as well as thrills through all his words? Dwight L. Moody was once holding a series of very successful meetings in Toronto. Suddenly his words lost their authority and power; his meetings became failures. What was the cause? The evangelist was struggling with doubt in regard to a Christian doctrine, and had lost his confidence in his message. "What saved me from defeat was just this," he has told us, "that through it all I could and did keep saying to myself, 'I must act as my heart tells me. I won't speak until I have light.'" When the doubt was set at rest and confidence was regained, the old-time power returned, too.

Throughout all Christ's utterances we feel the power of His authority. With authority He corrected the rabbis and priests. "Ye do err," He said to them, and with singular force repeated, "It is written." The Old Testament Scriptures were divinely inspired, as He recognized, but His own revelation of the Fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man is far above those in authority and power.

Forty-nine times in the Gospels we hear Him emphasize His authority by these solemn words, "Verily, I say unto you." "I came forth from the Father," He asserts. "Ye are from beneath, I am from above;" "I am the Light of the World;" "I am the way, the truth, and the life;"

"Behold, a greater than Solomon is here." To all mankind He said, "Follow me." "No man cometh to the Father but by me." "If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto me," He promised, and to His Father He said, "I have glorified Thee on earth." Could any man so speak? "The speech of this Man is the speech of God."

Had the words of any other great preacher perished; had the wisdom of Socrates, or the science of Aristotle, or the eloquence of Cicero, or the poetry of Æschylus or Sophocles been lost, our world had still been little different from what it is to-day. But had the words of Christ vanished into silence, passed into the great halls of oblivion, or had they never been spoken, our world had been quite other than what it is now. So great and infinite in value have been those teachings, in quantity smallest of fragments, in quality greatest and most priceless of the treasures that have enriched the world. *Fairbairn's Studies.*

Originality. Shakespeare, whom we name as being probably the most creative and original spirit the world has ever produced, one of the class, too, that are called self-made men, is yet tinged in all his works with human learning. His glory is, indeed, that so much of what is great in history and historic character, lives and appears in his dramatic creations. He is the high-priest, we sometimes hear, of human nature. But Christ, understanding human nature so as to address it more skilfully than he, desires no help from historic examples. He is the high-priest; rather, of the divine nature, speaking as One that has come out from God, and has nothing to borrow from the world. *Horace Bushnell.*

Depth. Most of the sayings of Jesus are in the form of pithy, pointed, crystalline words. They are simple, felicitous, and easily remembered; yet every one of them is packed full of thought, and the longer you brood over it the more you see in it. It is like a pool, so clear and sunny that it seems quite shallow, till, thrusting in your stick to touch the pebbles so clearly visible at the bottom, you discover that its depth far exceeds what you are trying to measure it with. *James Stalker, Imago Christi.*

A BRIEF REVIEW OF THE LESSONS

Lesson 1. There are false teachers, seemingly innocent and harmless as a lamb, but really evil and ferocious as a wolf. How shall they be known? By their fruits. Thorns do not produce grapes; figs do not produce thistles; a good tree produces good fruit; a tree that does not produce good fruit is destroyed. Not fair words but good deeds gain entrance into the kingdom of Heaven. Christ Himself will be the Judge at the last day, and evil-doers will be punished. The wise man who hears and does the words of Christ, is like a man who builds a house upon the rock, which can not be harmed by winds and floods. The foolish man, who hears Christ's words and does them not, is like a man who builds a house upon the sand, which is destroyed by the floods and winds.

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Lesson 2. The Pharisees see Christ's disciples eating grain in the fields on the Sabbath day, and accuse them of breaking the law of the Sabbath. Jesus defends His disciples by reminding the Pharisees that David, when hungry, ate the shewbread in the temple, which only the priests could lawfully eat, and that the priests themselves are obliged to offer sacrifices and thus perform labor on the Sabbath day.

The presence of a man with a withered hand in the synagogue calls forth another question: Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath? The Pharisees themselves lift a sheep out of a pit on the Sabbath, and a man is of far greater worth than a sheep. Jesus restores the withered hand. It is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.

Lesson 3. Elders of the Jews come to Jesus asking His aid in behalf of a centurion's servant, who lies at the point of death. The centurion is worthy of help, they tell Jesus, for he has built a synagogue for the Jews. Jesus is on His way to the centurion's home when He is met by friends of the latter, who bring the message that the centurion does not feel himself worthy of having Jesus come to him, that he knows Jesus needs only speak the word where He is, and his servant will be healed. To the people about Him Jesus exclaims, "I have not found so great faith, no, not in all Israel." The friends on their return find the servant well.

The following day Jesus meets a procession coming from the village of Nain. A dead man is being carried out, the only son of a widowed mother. Jesus is moved with compassion for her, and restores the young man to her, alive.

Lesson 4. Simon, a Pharisee, invites Jesus to a feast at his house, but fails to show him the ordinary courtesies due a guest. A woman that is a sinner, hearing that Jesus is with the Pharisee, comes in and, standing at His feet as He reclines upon a couch, impulsively bathes His feet with her tears, and wipes them with her hair. She then anoints them with the precious ointment which she has brought in an alabaster cruse. The Pharisee wonders that Jesus permits all this. Jesus knows his thoughts, and teaches him a greatly needed lesson by means of the parable of the two debtors. One owed a debt ten times greater than the other; the creditor forgives both; which will love him the more? Jesus asks Simon. Simon rightly answers, the larger debtor. Then Jesus applies His parable. Simon had shown Jesus no thoughtful courtesies; he had thought himself guilty of little; he had loved little. The woman had showered affection on Jesus; she had felt herself a great sinner; she had loved much. Her sins had been forgiven her. To the woman, Jesus then speaks these comforting words, "Thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace."

Lesson 5. Seated by the Sea of Galilee, Jesus utters His beautiful parable of the Sower. He describes a sower sowing seed, some of it falling upon the hard beaten path to be quickly devoured by birds, some of it falling upon shallow ground to be scorched by the sun after springing

up, some falling among thorns which will later choke it, and some falling upon good ground to yield varying amounts of fruit. Jesus then explains to His disciples the meaning of the parable. The seed is the word of God, and the fruit that the word yields, depends on the hearers, for hearers, like soil, differ in character. The wayside hearers are those who are indifferent to the word of God; the rocky-ground hearers are the superficial, shallow natures; the thorny-ground hearers are the "double-minded people," the half-way Christians who try to serve both God and Mammon; the good-ground hearers are those that hear the word, receive it, and bring forth fruit.

Lesson 6. In the parable of the Tares, Jesus pictures a householder being told by his servants that, whereas good seed was sown in his field, tares have sprung up with the wheat. It is the work of an enemy, He tells them. Shall we root up the tares, the servants ask? No, lest the wheat also be rooted up; let both grow till the harvest, when the tares shall be burned and the wheat stored in the barn.

The explanation of the parable Jesus gives His disciples at their request. The sower is Jesus Himself, the field is the world, the good seed are good men, the tares are wicked men, the enemy is Satan, the harvest is the end of the world, the reapers are the angels. The good shall be rewarded, the evil shall be punished.

Lesson 7. Jesus goes to the other side of the Lake and lands near Gadara, where He is met by a demoniac. The man has been restrained by chains and fetters, but he has broken them. He lives in the tombs outside the city, cuts himself with stones, and is heard crying day and night. Seeing Jesus, he runs and prostrates himself at His feet, exclaiming, "What have I to do with Thee, Jesus, Thou Son of the most High God?" "Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit," Jesus commands. The request is made that the demons may enter into a herd of swine, feeding near. Jesus commands them to leave the man. The frightened herd of swine rush down the steep slope into the Sea. Those in charge of the herd hasten to the city and country round about, and soon a wondering crowd assembles about Jesus, beholds the man that had been possessed now calm and sane, hears about the destruction of the swine, and, caring more for the loss of property than for the restoration of the afflicted man, begs Jesus to depart out of the coasts. The man wishes to go with Jesus, but Jesus bids him go home to his friends and "tell them what great things the Lord hath done for him," and soon he is telling the good news throughout all Decapolis.

Lesson 8. Luke now interrupts his narrative to tell why Herod says that Jesus is John the Baptist. Herod's superstition and conscience combine to torture him, and when he hears of the wonderful works of Jesus, he thinks that John, whom he beheaded, has come to life again. It is a painful story, the martyrdom of John the Baptist. Herodias, Herod's wife, had never forgiven John for rebuking her for her sin. She induced

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Herod to imprison John, but that did not satisfy her. Herod gave a great feast, and Salome, the daughter of Herodias, danced and pleased the drunken revelers. "Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee," was Herod's rash promise to her, and, by her mother's direction, she asked for the head of John the Baptist. Cowardly Herod, fearing the sneers of his guests should he not keep his promise, granted her request. John was beheaded in the prison, and Salome bore to her mother the ghastly trophy on a golden dish. John's disciples buried his body, and told the sad story to Jesus.

Lesson 9. On their return from their tour on which Christ had sent them, the disciples tell Him what they have done and taught. But they are so interrupted by the crowds of people, that they have no chance to receive counsel from Him, and no leisure even, as Mark says, so much as to eat. They seek to escape the crowds by going by boat to a desert place, but the people note the direction of their boat and, going by land, reach the destination first. Jesus has compassion on them, these sheep without a shepherd, and teaches them. They have nothing with them to eat, and as night approaches, the disciples advise that they be sent away to the villages to buy food. Jesus, however, tells His disciples to feed them. Two hundred pennyworth of bread would be necessary, they tell Him. "How many loaves have ye?" is Jesus' question. "Five, and two fishes." Then Jesus commands His disciples to make all the people sit down in orderly companies, and to distribute to them the food which, after blessing, He breaks for them. The hunger of five thousand people is thus satisfied by the food so miraculously supplied, and the fragments from the five loaves and two fishes fill twelve baskets.

Lesson 10. In order to escape from Galilee and be free to instruct His disciples, Jesus goes into pagan Phenicia, into the neighborhood of Tyre and Sidon. A Syrophenician woman hears of Jesus' presence, and going to Him, falls at His feet and persistently beseeches Him to send the demon out of her daughter. Jesus tells her that the children, the Jews, must first be fed, and it is not fitting to take their bread and cast it to the dogs, the Gentiles. The sorrowing mother quickly answers, "Yes, Lord; yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs." Pleased with the faith shown in her answer, Jesus grants her request.

Lesson 11. Near Cæsarea Philippi, Jesus and His disciples have an intimate talk. "Whom do men say that I am?" Jesus asks them. "John the Baptist, Elias, Jeremias, or one of the prophets," is the answer. "But whom say ye that I am?" "Thou are the Christ, the Son of the living God." "Blessed art thou. Upon this rock I will build my church."

But when Jesus begins to tell them about His approaching suffering and death, then Peter does not hesitate to chide Him, and exclaims, "Be it far from Thee, Lord: this shall not be unto Thee." He is no longer a rock, but Satan, and severely Jesus rebukes him. Jesus then tells them that they, too, must suffer for His sake. "If any man will come after me,

let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. What is a man profited if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? The Son of Man shall reward every man according to his works."

Lesson 12. Jesus takes His three best-loved disciples up into a mountain to pray. While He is praying His face is transfigured, glorified, even His garments glisten whiter than snow. The drowsy disciples, awakened, behold with Him celestial visitors, Moses and Elias, talking about His departure from earth. The disciples are bewildered, and Peter, not knowing what he says, asks that they may build three tabernacles there, for he would thus keep the heavenly visitors always. A cloud overshadows them, and from the cloud this message is heard, "This is my beloved Son: hear him." The cloud disappears, and Jesus is alone.

LESSON OUTLINES

Title	Persons	Outline
1. The Two Foundations.	Jesus, Disciples, Multitude.	Beware of false Prophets. By their fruits all are known. Be not hypocrites. Build a firm foundation.
2. Jesus and the Sabbath.	Jesus, Disciples, Pharisees, Man with Withered Hand.	Disciples plucking corn. Disapproval of Pharisees. David's example. Duty of priests. Disabled man. Do well on the Sabbath.
3. Jesus' Power over Disease and Death.	Jesus, Centurion, Servant, Friends, Multitude, Disciples, Widow and her son.	Wish of centurion. Wondrous faith. Widow's son. Wonder of people.
4. Jesus the Sinner's Friend.	Jesus, Simon, Woman, Guests.	Simon's feast. Sinner's homage. Simon's lesson. Sin forgiven.
5. The Parable of The Sower.	Jesus, Disciples, Multitude.	Sowing seed. Smooth beaten ground. Stony ground. Strangling thorns. Soil fruitful. Sowing the Word. Stolid hearers. Superficial hearers. Sterling hearers.

Second Quarter Lesson XIII June 24	Title	Persons	Outline
	6. The Parable of The Tares.	Jesus, Disciples, Multitude.	Tares among the wheat. rouble of servants. olerated till harvest. eaching of the parable.
	7. A Fierce Demoniac Healed.	Jesus, Disciples, Demoniac, Swineherds, People.	Demoniac of Gadara. evils exorcised. estruction of swine. ismay of people. evoted witness.
	8. Death of John the Baptist.	Herod, People, John the Baptist, Herodias, Salome, Guests, Executioner, John's Disciples.	Herod's remorse. erodias' hatred. ilarity at feast. erod's oath. erodias' revenge. eroism of John's life.
	9. Feeding the Five Thousand.	Jesus, Disciples, Five Thousand.	Fatigue of Jesus. ollowing crowd. eeling of compassion. ive thousand fed. ragments saved.
	10. The Gentile Woman's Faith.	Jesus, Disciples, Woman and her Daughter.	Withdrawal from Galilee. oman's request. ithheld favor. itty retort. onder wrought.
	11. Peter's Great Confession.	Jesus, Disciples.	Popular opinion of Christ. eter's testimony. raise of Christ. ersecution foretold. resumption of Peter. rompt rebuke. rofit and loss.
	12. The Transfiguration.	Jesus, Peter, John, James, Moses, Elijah, Voice.	Talking with God. ransfiguration of Christ. heme of Moses and Elias. hree tabernacles. estimony from Heaven.

A REVIEW OF THE GEOGRAPHY OF PALESTINE IN THE TIME OF CHRIST

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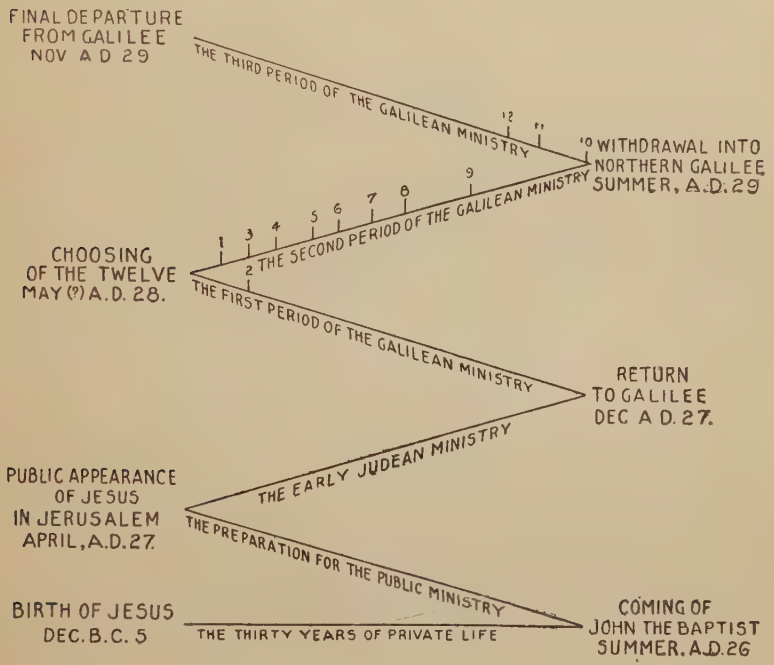
Paragraphs 25-53.

A CHRONOLOGICAL REVIEW


FINAL DEPARTURE FROM GALILEE NOV A D 29
THE THIRD PERIOD OF THE GALILEAN MINISTRY
10 WITHDRAWAL INTO NORTHERN GALILEE SUMMER, A.D. 29
THE SECOND PERIOD OF THE GALILEAN MINISTRY
CHOOSING OF THE TWELVE MAY (?) A.D. 28.
THE FIRST PERIOD OF THE GALILEAN MINISTRY
RETURN TO GALILEE DEC A D. 27.
THE EARLY JUDEAN MINISTRY
PUBLIC APPEARANCE OF JESUS IN JERUSALEM APRIL, A.D. 27.
THE PREPARATION FOR THE PUBLIC MINISTRY
BIRTH OF JESUS DEC. B.C. 5
THE THIRTY YEARS OF PRIVATE LIFE
COMING OF JOHN THE BAPTIST SUMMER, A.D. 26

What four periods of Christ's life were studied last quarter? What are the limits and the dates of each period? What entire period has been studied this quarter? What are the limits and dates of this period? Give the chief events in chronological order. Add the chief events of *Part VI* that have been studied this quarter. How many months between the events of the first lesson and those of the last? What parables were spoken during this time? When did John send his messengers to Jesus? What were the chief miracles wrought? Between what two lessons did the stilling of the tempest occur? The raising of Jairus' daughter? What important discourses were delivered?

Instead of conducting this review by questions and answers, the events of this quarter may be read aloud from one of the Lives of Christ.

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A REVIEW OF LIFE AND CUSTOMS IN PALESTINE

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Customs of feasts..... 181
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Things regarded as unclean:
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A REVIEW BY COMPARISONS AND CONTRASTS

Compare the healing of the nobleman's son (John 4) with that of the centurion's servant, Lesson 3.

Compare the exhibition of faith by the centurion with that of the Syrophenician woman.

Compare the trial of Gideon's faith with that of the Syrophenician woman.

Compare the perseverance of Jacob wrestling with the angel and that of the Syrophenician woman.

Contrast the miracle wrought by Elisha at Shunem (2 Kings 4) with that wrought on the centurion's servant.

Contrast Herod and John the Baptist.

Compare the remorse of Joseph's brethren and the remorse of Herod.

Compare Belshazzar's feast and Herod's feast.

OTHER SUGGESTIONS FOR REVIEWS

1. Prepare a set of twelve cards for the Review by writing upon each one, two or three questions about the topic of the lesson which was discussed in class. Give the second card to a pupil to think about while the questions upon the first card are being answered, the third while the second is being considered, etc.

2. Mark off twelve squares upon your board, and in each write some

word or draw some sketch that will at once recall the lesson. From these thoughts as starting points, recall the chief events of the lesson taught.

3. Bring a supply of paper and pencils to class, and let the pupils spend the entire period writing answers to questions that you have prepared beforehand as especially adapted to your class. On the following Sunday, commend good work, and correct any false impressions that may have been shown by the answers.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. What lessons already studied have taught the lesson of humility? (Jan. 28, March 4, April 15, June 3.) 2. How did Jesus in His own life teach the lesson of humility? (Mark 10.44, 45; John 13.14, 15; Phil. 2.5-8.) 3. Bring to class the verse in the Bible about humility which you like the best. Turn to *Humility* in the Subject-Index of your Bible for a list of verses. 4. Tell the story of Christ blessing little children. (Mark 10.13-16.) 5. How can one be a "stumbling-block" in the Christian life of another? 6. What ambitions would Christ approve?

BETWEEN LESSON XII, SECOND QUARTER, AND LESSON I, THIRD QUARTER

As Jesus with His disciples came down from the Mount of Transfiguration, a great crowd of people met Him, among them a father with his demoniac boy, whom he had brought to be healed. The disciples had tried in vain to drive out the demon. After Jesus had cured the boy, His disciples asked Him privately why they had been unsuccessful in their attempt, and Jesus told them it was because of their lack of faith. A second time Jesus foretold His death and resurrection, evidently a frequent theme with Him now, but the disciples "understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask Him."

Reaching Capernaum, Jesus directed Peter to catch a fish, and take the coin found in its mouth to pay their temple tax. "The coin in the fish's mouth is probably an oriental expression for the value of the fish caught, or a modification of words of Jesus which themselves had that meaning."

On the way to Capernaum the disciples had been disputing among themselves as to which of them should be greatest in the kingdom of Heaven. No doubt the others were envious of the special favor shown to Peter, James, and John. Jesus referred to their dispute after reaching Capernaum, and gave them the memorable discourse of our next lesson. (Matt. 17.14-27; Mark 9.14-33; Luke 9.37-45.)

THIRD QUARTER

LESSON I—JULY 1

JESUS AND THE CHILDREN

Matt. 18.1-14. (Read Mark 9.14-50; 10.13-16.) Commit vv. 2, 3.

Golden Text

It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish. Matt. 18.14.

Time: Autumn, A. D. 29.
Place: Capernaum. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 54–59 and 109.

LESSON TEXT. MATT. 18.1-14

1 At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?
2 And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them.
3 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.
4 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.
5 And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me.
6 But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and *that* he were drowned in the depth of the sea.
7 Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!
8 Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast *them* from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire.
9 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire.
10 Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.
11 For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.
12 How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?
13 And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that *sheep,* than of the ninety and nine which went not astray.
14 Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *At the same time.* When Jesus was talking with Peter about the tribute money. (Matt. 17.22-27.) In Capernaum. (Mark 9.33.) *The disciples came saying.* Mark tells us that the disciples had previously debated the question, and Jesus asked them about their dispute (Mark 9.33).

3. *Except ye be converted.* R. V., *Except ye turn.* Turn from their false ambition and jealousy. *Become as little children.* Compared with adults, children are patterns of humility. *Ye shall not enter.* R. V., *Ye shall in nowise enter.* The double Greek negative is very forcible. So far from being the greatest in the kingdom of Heaven, ye shall not so much as enter. *Vincent.*

4. *Humble himself as this little child.* The disciples must seek to become what the child is by nature, humble.

5. *Receiving* here seems to denote, not merely hospitality, but companionship, friendship. Those who are not personally or socially attractive may be received as Christ's representatives. *Broadus. In my name.* For the sake of my revealed character. *Maclaren.*

6. *Offend.* R. V., *cause to stumble,* to sin. *These little ones* are those who are small in the sense corresponding to that of the word "great" in the disciples' question. They are those, therefore, that are small and weak, and (as it is sometimes expressed) of no account in the church, whether this be due to their tender years, or to slender abilities, or to scanty means, or to little faith. *Gibson.*

7. *Offences.* R. V., *Occasions of stumbling. It must be that offences come.* Stumbling-blocks are a necessary part of a state of probation and corrective discipline, and God will not prevent their coming. *Broadus.*

8. Christ now turns to the thought that we may become stumbling-blocks to ourselves. *Offend thee,* R. V., *Causeth thee to stumble. Halt.* Lame. *Everlasting fire.* Whatever these words may mean, there can be no doubt that they signify some awful kind and extent of punishment, the fear of which may deter from such sins as incur them. *Williams.*

10. *Their angels do always behold the face of my Father.* The general sense is: God's *highest* angels represent the *least* subjects of His kingdom. *Schaff.* In general abstract language, the truth Jesus solemnly declares is that God, His Father, takes a special interest in the little ones in all senses of the word. This truth is expressed in terms of the current Jewish belief in guardian angels. *Bruce.*

12. The sense is: If a man, who is evil, can sometimes show pity and love, how much more compassionate and tender may you believe the God of love to be. *Schaeffer.*

This parable was spoken on a later occasion to a different audience. (Luke 15.4-7.) Here it is a lesson for the disciples (the under shepherds), showing them their duty: there it is a rebuke for the Pharisees, who

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objected to this seeking and saving on the part of the Good Shepherd. *Schaff.*

13. *Rejoiceth more.* The joy at the recovery of the strayed sheep is proportional to the sorrow occasioned by its loss and the pains and trouble expended in the search; and this pleasure would at the moment be greater than the satisfaction with which the other members of the flock are regarded. *Williams.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

3. *Except ye become as little children.* I number among my friends an old miser, who has had a hard, wild life, and was a victim of drink. As he sat waiting once in my house, a little child who had never known sin came into the room, and fearlessly offered him his hand. This a grown man would not do without shrinking, but the child had not learned to be a respecter of persons. The scarred face lightened; the visions of demons vanished for a moment, and the poor man repeated almost to himself these words of Dickens: "I know now how Jesus could liken the kingdom of God to a child." *David Starr Jordan.*

We need love's tender lessons taught
As only weakness can;
God hath His small interpreters,
The child must teach the man.

We wander wide through evil years,
Our eyes of faith grow dim;
But he is freshest from His hands,
And nearest unto Him. *Whittier.*

9. *If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out.* According to a very common figure of speech Jesus puts the eye or the organ of seeing for the thing seen; the hand or the organ of doing for the thing done — the eye being the passive side of our nature, the hand the active. It is as though our King had said: If that which your eye sees or your hand does, occasions you to sin either against others or against yourself, then renounce that thing so thoroughly that it shall become to you as though it were annihilated. It is not to be taken literally. In the reign of Bloody Mary, Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, was led to the stake, and, raising the hand which in a moment of weakness had subscribed to the dogmas of the Papal Supremacy and the Real Presence, exclaimed, "this unworthy hand hath offended!" and then, thrusting that hand into the flames of the fagots Cranmer did an act which, in spite of all my reverence for him as one of the noble army of martyrs, I can not but feel was unworthy of an educated conscience. Cranmer's hand was no more to be

blamed for having subscribed to the doctrine of Rome than it was to be praised for having transcribed the four Evangelists. The guilt was not in the hand; the guilt was in the soul that yielded the hand. *George Dana Boardman.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

6. *A millstone hanged about his neck.* Grain was usually ground in Palestine in hand-mills. Two women turned the upper stone about the fixed lower stone. There were also much larger mills, which were turned by asses, and in these the upper millstone, or rider, was very large and heavy. The word used in the original Greek for millstone means this large millstone. This punishment by drowning was a practice of the Romans, Greeks, and Syrians. According to St. Jerome, this was the punishment meted out by the Romans to some of the leaders of the insurrection under Judas of Galilee.

Grinding Grain

The Jews did not indeed despise little children, but, like all ancient nations, left them exclusively to the charge of women, repressed them, kept them in the background, did little or nothing to mold their infant years. When the eager, loving mothers brought their children to Jesus that He should bless them, the disciples were impatient at what they regarded as feminine intrusiveness, and rebuked those that brought them. But Jesus was more than usually displeased at this lack of sympathy. He took the little ones in His arms, laid His hands upon them, and blessed them and said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of heaven." *F. W. Farrar, Life of Christ.*

9. *Hell fire.* The word in the original is *geenna.* The valley of the Son of Hinnom (Josh. 15.8; 18.16; Neh. 11.30; Jer. 19.2) was situated on the southwest side of the city of Jerusalem; the Arabs still call it Wady Jehennam. In this valley, which was once distinguished for its beauty and fertility, the idolatrous Israelites of a former age sacrificed their children to the god Molech (2 Chron. 28.3; 33.6; Jer. 7.31). King Josiah, who desired to extirpate idolatry, defiled the whole valley by causing dead bodies to be cast there (2 Kings 23.10, 14). It then became, according to ancient Jewish accounts, a place of deposit for the bodies of dead animals and all manner of filth. Its vicinity to the city rendered it necessary to maintain constant fires there for the purpose of destroying the accu-

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mulated mass, and purifying the atmosphere. The Hebrew name of "the valley of Hinnom" (Ge-Hinnom, Josh. 15.8) expressed with Greek letters, assumed the form *Geenna.* The whole character of the valley rendered the region a fit image of the condition of the ungodly, and of the place of their eternal punishment; its name was accordingly transferred to the latter in the sense of hell. *Charles F. Schaeffer.*

12-14. *The Parable of the Lost Sheep.* I do not remember ever to have seen in the East a flock of sheep without a shepherd. In such a landscape as Judea, where a day's pasture is thinly scattered over an unfenced tract of country, covered with delusive paths, still frequented by the wild beasts, and rolling off into the desert, the man and his character are indispensable. On some high moor, across which at night the hyenas howl, when you meet him, sleepless, far-sighted, weather-beaten, armed, leaning on his staff, and looking out over his scattered sheep, every one of them on his heart, you understand why Christ took him as the type of self-sacrifice. *George Adam Smith, Historical Geography of the Holy Land.*

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. The flowers got into a debate one morning as to which of them was the flower of God; and the rose said, "I am the flower of God, for I am the fairest and the most perfect in beauty and variety of form and delicacy of fragrance, of all the flowers." And the crocus said, "No, you are not the flower of God. Why, I was blooming long before you bloomed. I am the primitive flower; I am the first one." And the lily of the valley said, modestly, "I am small but I am white; perhaps I am the flower of God." And the trailing arbutus said, "Before any of you came forth, I was blooming under the leaves and under the snow. Am I not the flower of God?" But all the flowers cried out, "No, you are no flower at all; you are a come-outer." And then God's wind, blowing over the garden, brought this message to them: "Little flowers, do you not know that every flower that answers God's sweet spring call, and comes out of the cold, dark earth, and lifts its head above the sod, and blooms forth, catching the sunlight and flinging it back to men, taking the sweet south wind from God and giving it back to others in sweet and blessed fragrance—do you not know they are all God's flowers?" *Lyman Abbott.*

For Older Pupils. It is remarkable that the literature of the Dark Ages presents no model childhood. But we see how troops of children crowd literature since the Dark Ages. It is the glory of Christianity's Book that the child is in it:—the little maid missionary in a foreign land pointing Naaman to the only source of healing; the boy-priest Samuel serving in the Tabernacle; the lad with his two fishes and barley loaves; little Timothy, at the knee of his mother and grandmother, drink-

ing in Bible stories; the children in the Temple singing their hosannahs to the Son of David.' These show the high estimate which Christianity puts upon childhood. *David Gregg.*

A dreary place would be this earth,
Were there no little people in it;
The song of life would lose its mirth,
Were there no children to begin it.

The sterner souls would grow more stern,
Unfeeling nature more inhuman,
And man to stoic coldness turn,
And woman would be less than woman.

Whittier.

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. Childlike Humility

True Humility. It is easy to humble ourselves by self-disparaging words, or by symbolic acts, as when the Egyptian monks wore hoods, like children's caps, but to be humble in spirit, and so childlike! The really humble man is as great in the moral world as he is rare. *A. B. Bruce.*

"I don't know much, I only know a little," said a small lad in answer to a question that he did not know. There was no trace of "humility" in his remark, to him it was a mere statement of a self-evident fact. This consciousness of being little is possessed by all children naturally; it is a characteristic of childhood which is later outgrown. We all need to become what once we were, little in our own sight.

When the great Doctor Guthrie was dying he asked to have a hymn sung, "a bairn's hymn," and so they sang:

"Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,
Look upon a little child."

Duty of Possessing the Child Nature. Childlikeness is the loftiest attainment, the deepest strength, the highest charm, of Christian character. . . . Childishness is a blot and a flaw, and shuts a man out of life's best things in every realm. No higher praise can be given to any man than to say that he is childlike. Hardly a severer thing can be said than that he is childish.

Childlikeness is likeness to the child in the admirable quality of childhood at its best, simplicity, a trunk from which spring many beautiful branches. It is single-hearted. It is earnest, honest, sincere, straight forward, humble, teachable, believing, obedient, pure. The quality is con-

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sistent with the greatest learning, the greatest profundity and subtility of mind, and the greatest force of character. It is more, it is indispensable to these things. The lives that have touched humanity at, and to, its highest, have had it. They have been as deep as the ocean and as transparent as a tropic sea. The truest men of science, like Agassiz and Faraday; men of letters whose charm is greatest, like Goldsmith and Irving; the loftiest seers, like John; the greatest statesmen, like Lincoln and Gladstone, have had it in unusual degree. *Editorial in Sunday School Times.*

How the Apostles Learned the Lesson of Humility. Though the thought was new to them at the time it did come home to them. They did not, indeed, get over their selfishness all at once; but how grandly were they cured of it when their training was finished! If there is one thing more characteristic of the apostles in their after-life than any other, it is their self-forgetfulness, their self-effacement, we may say. Where does Matthew ever say a word about the sayings or doings of Matthew? Even John, who was nearest of all to the heart of the Saviour, and with Him in all His most trying hours, can write a whole Gospel without ever mentioning his own name; and when he has occasion to speak of John the Baptist does it as if there were no other John in existence. So it was with them all. We must not forget that, so far as this lesson of self-denial is concerned, they were only beginners now (see 16.21); but after they had completed their course and received the Pentecostal seal, they did not disgrace their Teacher any more: they did then really and nobly deny self; and thus did they at last attain true greatness in the kingdom of Heaven. *John Monro Gibson.*

II. Child Life in Various Ages

Children in the Bible. The Bible is unique among works of ancient times in its attention to childhood. There is but one child in the *Iliad;* there is none in most of the ancient books. The Bible gives us the childhood of Joseph and David, Moses and Samuel. Jesus came into the world a little child. He shows us His estimate of childhood in three incidents—when the children were brought to Him and He blessed them: when He sat a child in the midst and said, "Except ye become as a little child"; and when He refused to silence the children who sang His praise in the temple. *W. E. Barton.*

Children in the Early Church. Doctor Charles S. Robinson studied the old slabs that had been brought up from the galleries of the catacombs and were arranged in one of the rooms of the Vatican Museum. Among the epitaphs he found these about little children:

"Here lies Sosimus, a believing child of believing parents; he lived two years, one month, and twenty-five days."

"Here rests in peace Urcia Florentina, a believer (or, a faithful); she lived five years, eight months and eight days."

Children in China. Two hundred and fifty million graves are dug every thirty years in China. The whole countryside is one thickly sown cemetery, and yet there are no tokens of burials of children. Not a single monument or tombstone marks the grave of a child. What does it mean? Simply that Buddhism and Confucianism has nowhere said, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." The ancient paganism of Greece and Rome passed the children by. So to-day the proud systems of China and India stoop never to reckon in the children. A child-life is too small, too insignificant. Jesus, only, took the little ones up in His arms, and exalted them, and by His words and example gave the child the place it holds in Christian lands to-day. With us our little ones are gifts from Jesus. Away from us they are with Jesus, the children's King. *D. Davies Moore.*

Children of Sparta. When the Spartans were conquered by their enemy a demand was made for fifty boys. They refused to send the boys, but offered to send instead one hundred eminent men, on the ground that they knew what the men had made of themselves, but only the gods could tell the possibilities of fifty boys.

Contrast with this the story told by General Trina, an officer of Colombia, about the victory at Palo Negro.

"There was a strong force of liberals ambushed in thick brushwood on the side of a hill," says the General. "One of our generals was ordered to clear them out, but he could not locate their exact position, and he knew that to advance blindly upon them would mean the loss of a great many of his men.

"What do you think he did? Among his troops there were about forty little boys from ten to fourteen years old. He picked them out and told them to march across the exposed ground toward the enemy. They had never faced death before, and were proud to march ahead of the rest. Before they had gone far thousands of riflemen opened fire on them, and every one of the forty was killed. Then, the enemy having unmasked their position, our general easily drove them away. A pit was dug after the battle, and the corpses of the forty boys were all thrown into it together."

III. Giving Up Good Things for Better

If thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off. There is an interesting legend told about Leonardo da Vinci. When the monks of the convent in Milan gathered to admire the great picture of the Last Supper that he had painted on the wall there, much discussion arose as to which detail of the painting was the best. The artist listened while they came to the conclusion that the drawing and coloring of the table-cloth was the best. He had brought them to look upon the face of Christ, and they were absorbed in the table-cloth! He seized his brush as they finished

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speaking, and with one sweep blotted out every detail in the bit of cloth which they had so admired.

That was the lesson Christ taught His disciples in His warning about their becoming stumbling-blocks to themselves. Whatever is a stumbling-block to the higher life, whatever, good and perfect though it may be in itself, like the table-cloth in the great painting, keeps us from seeing Christ's likeness and in attaining to the highest good, is to be cast from us.

Essential and Secondary Things. The distinction between men is not so much a distinction of power as it is a difference in purpose, direction and trend. The one knows what things are essential and worth while, and the other blunders and lives for the secondary things. It is not that the secondary things are not important. It is important that Tennyson should have a noble figure and fine face, but the essential thing is that the poet can sing his *Idyls of the King*. . . . It is an important thing that a man has his strength and wisdom and wealth, but it is an essential thing that he convert these things upward toward character and God. And in reviewing the lives of the great, we can only say that failure is the selection and emphasis of secondary and unimportant things in life, and that success is the skill in selecting the essential and converting one's offices and honors upward into character and service that abide and are really worth while. *Newell Dwight Hillis, The Quest of Happiness.*

Choosing the Best. One summer a college woman whom I knew went for a few weeks to a factory town. By some chance she found herself in a boarding-house with three young women who from their childhood had been employed in the mills of the place. One of them I had met at a college settlement. She was excessively fond of fine raiment, and at the settlement we had always been able to measure her material advancement by the quality and quantity of her personal adornments.

During the winter following the visit of the college woman to her town I observed, with some concern, that the girl from the factory wore no new feathers and furbelows, and, indeed, little new apparel of any kind. Her old garments, neatly freshened and repaired, were made to serve. She was even more cheerful than formerly; and I tried to believe that my fears lest financial distress might have come upon her were groundless.

"Can you tell me anything about Schumann?" she asked me suddenly, one night when we were alone.

"Schumann?" I exclaimed.

"Yes," said the girl. "You see, I'm learning to play a piece of his music."

We talked a little about Schumann, and then she said shyly: "I've always liked music, and always wished I could play. Well, last summer a lady boarded at our house; she said she'd always liked German and wanted to study it. She wore real plain clothes, 'cause she was saving up money to study in Germany. And it came into my head that

I could do that and take music lessons—so I am doing it." *Elizabeth McCracken in The Outlook.*

The Tragedy of Neglected Good. Doctor Dawson used the phrase in one of the Plymouth Church addresses last November. How accurate it is! There is a tragedy of vice and crime. There is another sort of tragedy which obtrudes itself far less upon our sight, but which is even more sorrowful and bitter. It is the tragedy of the life that is neglecting its heavenly best and being content with its earthly mean. There are so many who are not so bad as they might be, and lovers of the good rejoice sometimes in this. That they are not so good as they might be, that they are letting the highest go by and allowing the holiest service to knock in vain at their doors, this is the tragedy of the neglected good. How often we need to be shown the highest opportunity and the supreme privilege, in order that we may not become so engrossed with other less important duties that we forget the supreme quest! ***Zion's Herald.***

SENTENCE SERMONS

He who is pleased with himself grows no more. *Alexander Maclaren.*

Do not let the good things of life rob you of the best things. *Maltbie Babcock.*

He who can not bear humility can not wear honor. *Selected.*

The better is a great enemy of the best. *Newell Dwight Hillis.*

He that is least in the kingdom of Heaven is greater than he that is greatest outside. *Joseph Parker.*

The great man is he who does not lose the child's heart. *Mencius.*

When you save a man, you save a unit; when you save a child, you save a multiplication-table. *John Wanamaker.*

The last and worst thing that can be said of a nation, is that it has made its children sad and weary. *Ruskin.*

The slowest-sailing ship settles the rate for the fleet, and the strong are, by their strength, bound to shape their conduct so as to consult the susceptibilities of the weak. *Alexander Maclaren.*

Sheltering Arms, Children's Aid Societies, Infant Asylums, Orphans' Homes, these are simply Christ in society, working out His great and loving heart through humanity and repeating the act of nineteen hundred years ago when He caressed the children and blessed them. *David Gregg.*

No thought so comforts and strengthens the heart of a good man as the wonderful thought of God—God, not as a Creator only, but as a loving Father, deeply interested in whatever touches even casually the life of His most defenseless child. *Frederick R. Marvin.*

In the kingdom of Christ there will be an aristocracy, but it will be the nobility of service; there will be superiority, but it will be the priority of humility. *Charles Edward Locke.*

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THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven. Matt. 19.14.

Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise. Matt. 21.16.

Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men. 1 Cor. 14.20.

Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time. 1 Pet. 5.6.

Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant. Matt. 20.27.

Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted. Matt. 23.12.

The Son of man goeth as it is written of him; but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed: it had been good for that man if he had not been born. Matt. 26.24.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Children, learn what God wants from you. He wants your childhood. He wants your faith and your love. He wants you to pattern your childhood after His. He wants you to obey your parents as He obeyed His. He wants you to treat with respect those who are older. He wants you to ask questions and to learn. He wants you to make a public confession of His name, as He publicly confessed His Father's name. He wants you to join in His worship and praise. *David Gregg.*

THE LESSON SUMMARY

The disciples seem not to have taken to heart Christ's predictions at Cæsarea Philippi about His coming suffering and death. Rather do their thoughts center in the near approach of His kingdom and their own share in its power and glory. Jesus is thinking of His crucifixion; His disciples are thinking of His coronation. Pride and ambition and jealousy are rife among them. Which of them shall be greatest?

Putting a little child in their midst, Jesus teaches humility. "You want to be high? You must be as low as this little child. In my kingdom the humblest is highest. Beware of being a stumbling-block to one of these little ones. Beware of becoming a stumbling-block to yourself. The punishment is sure." He shows them the highest of created beings, the angels, serving the lowliest of the children of men. He tells them that He, the Son of Man, has humbled Himself to seek and save the lost. By the parable of the shepherd with the ninety-nine sheep that are safe and the one that has gone astray, He teaches them the worth to God of

the individual soul that is lost. These have all been lessons greatly needed by the apostles, lessons that they learned gradually, but perfectly in the end.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The value and the harm of rivalry.

2. The teaching of Jesus about selfish ambition.

3. The parable of the seeking shepherd may be said to contain the germ of all missionary enterprise. Its dominant note is that if men are to be brought into the fold of God they must be sought. They are both unwilling and incapable of seeking the fold for themselves, as the lost sheep are. *William J. Dawson.*

4. The law of the kingdom is conversion in childhood. Christianity draws her mighty hosts from Christian schools; the Sabbath-school is the missionary of the church. "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord," is the secret of the tenacious existence of the Hebrew people, and the fountain of the life of the Christian church is that saying of the Master, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God." *John Philip Newman.*

5. We are liable to consider children in the church relation only as potentialities of the future. They are potentialities of the present, and a church that has no place for them, and only tolerates them because of what it expects them to become, is not half the church it ought to be. *The Independent.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Read in 2 Kings 4.1-7 how the widow's oil was multiplied in order to save her two sons from being sold for debt. 2. Read in Lev. 25.39-41 the divine commandment about bondmen in the year of Jubilee. 3. What words of Jesus were the occasion of Peter's question? (Matt. 18.15-17.) 4. Tell the parable of the Unmerciful Servant. 5. What did you learn about the treatment of enemies in the lesson for March 11? 6. Tell the story of the death of Stephen (Acts 8.5, 8-15; 9.54-60). 7. Continue your Life of Christ throughout this quarter.

BETWEEN LESSON I AND LESSON II

Continuing His discourse to His disciples, Jesus told them what to do in case a brother offended: first tell him his fault, then rebuke him in the presence of two or three others, and then, if he still failed to give heed, tell his offense to the church. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name," Jesus added, "there am I in the midst of them." This counsel about a brother's trespass led Peter to ask his question about forgiveness. (Matt. 18.15-20.)

THE DUTY OF FORGIVENESS

Matt. 18.21-35. (Read Matt. 18.15-20; Luke 17.1-5.) Commit vv. 21, 22.

Golden Text

Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. Matt. 6.12.

Time: Early Autumn, A. D. 29.
Place: Capernaum. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 60–62 and 109.

LESSON TEXT. MATT. 18.21-35

21 Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?
22 Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.
23 Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants.
24 And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents.
25 But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.
26 The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.
27 Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.
28 But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took *him* by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest.
29 And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.
30 And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.
31 So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done.
32 Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me:
33 Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee?
34 And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.
35 So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

21. *Then came Peter to him and said.* Verses 15-17 explain the occasion for this question. *Till seven times?* The rabbis taught that forgiveness should be granted three times, and Peter doubtless thought seven a generous number.

22. *Until seventy times seven.* There should be no limit to forgiveness.

23. *Therefore.* Because the measure of forgiveness is limitless. *Would take account of,* R. V., *made a reckoning with. A king and his servants.* The parable pictures a great oriental monarch whose high officials—viceroys or satraps—would have to render to him an account of the immense revenues that passed through their hands. Herodotus and Zenophon termed great officers of state "slaves."

24. *Ten thousand talents.* Before coined money was known, gold and silver by weight were used as money. If silver, the value of the talents would be from ten to fifteen millions of dollars; if gold, twice as much. Christ evidently intended merely to specify a sum too great to be paid.

26. *Worshiped him,* literally, *prostrated himself. I will pay thee all.* He was willing to promise the impossible.

27. *An hundred pence.* About fifteen dollars, not a millionth part of his own debt. "These offenses to those are as a drop of water to the boundless ocean." *Chrysostom.*

32. The king could overlook dishonesty in money matters, but not such inhumanity and villainy. *Bruce.*

33. *Shouldst thou not also have had compassion?* The comparison of the two acts, the implied assumption that the pity of the one act would be after the pattern of the other, was, we may believe, designed to lead the disciples to the true meaning of the prayer they had been taught to use, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." *Plumptre.*

34. *Wroth.* Angry, indignant.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

21. *Forgive.* What is it to "forgive"? As used in the Bible, there are at least six different Hebrew and Greek words, with very different root-meanings, translated "forgive" in the Authorized and Revised Versions. Some of these Bible meanings of "forgiveness" are "to cover," "to lift away," "to send away," or "let go," "to be gracious to." Some of the ordinary English meanings of the word "forgive," again, are "to release from punishment or from obligation," "to make amends," "to cease to cherish resentment towards," "to excuse," "to show forgiveness in spirit or conduct." *Sunday School Times.*

26. *I will pay thee all.* From time to time we read in our newspapers of honorable men discharging with interest, debts they had incurred years

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before. Can we do something like that with this debt we owe to God? Can we work it off in the days and years that are to come? Work as hard as you can, when the day is done, what will you have to say? Just this, "We have only done what we ought." Only what we ought—there is no margin, nothing over, which you can apply to the reduction of the old debt. It would be as easy to bale the ocean dry as to hope by your own efforts to pay this debt. . . .

God will cancel the debt! As far as the East is from the West so far will He remove our transgression from us. Listen to His invitation and His gracious promise, "Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord. Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." *J. D. Jones.*

35. You say that the desert is a desert because no rain falls upon it; but that is only half the truth. No rain falls upon it because it is a desert. The heated air rushing up from the arid surface disperses the vapors that would descend in rain. Some moisture there must be on earth, else there can't be rain from heaven. So in your heart this forgiving disposition must be, else you can not rejoice in the fullness of God's forgiving grace. *Washington Gladden.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

21. *Till seven times?* The Talmud relates, without blame, the conduct of a rabbi who would not forgive a very small slight of his dignity, though asked by the offender for thirteen successive years, and that on the day of Atonement; the reason being that the offended rabbi had learned by a dream that his offending brother would attain the highest dignity; whereupon he feigned himself irreconcilable, to force the other to migrate from Palestine to Babylon, where, unenvied by him, he might occupy the chief place. *Edersheim.*

24. *Owed him ten thousand talents.* "The Oriental trusts utterly when he does trust, and when he loses confidence it is for ever."

25. *Commanded him to be sold.* The Jews, like other Orientals, were in the habit of selling a debtor and all his household as bond-servants, for part-payment of the debt. This is still a common practice in Eastern countries. By divine decree, this bondage came to an end in the year of Jubilee. According to Roman law, a man's wife and children were a part of his property.

26. *Fell down and worshipped him.* This humble attitude was prompted by great and peculiar distress; but still it would not have been assumed, unless the custom of the times had given it sanction in the practice of those who wanted to show extreme respect to their superiors. It seems to have been common to show different degrees of respect to different persons, according to their rank and importance, by bending the body in a greater or less measure. Simply to bow down the head, was an

expression of mere common civility: to curve the body low down, signified a considerable degree of reverence: to throw it entirely down, with the face upon the ground, was an act of the greatest homage. *Nevin, Biblical Antiquities.*

28. *Took him by the throat.* The Roman law allowed creditors to drag their debtors before the judge, holding them by the throat, and Roman writers speak of a debtor's neck being twisted till blood flowed from mouth and nostrils.

34. *Delivered him to the tormentors.* In early times there were certain legal tortures: a chain weighing fifteen pounds; a pittance of food barely sufficient to sustain life, which the Roman creditor might apply to the debtor for bringing him to terms. In the East, too, where no depth of apparent poverty excludes the suspicion that there may be somewhere a hidden store, where it is almost a point of honor not to pay but on hardest compulsion, the torture would be often used to wring something from the sufferings of the creditor himself, or from the compassion of his friends. In all those cases the jailer would be naturally the "tormentor" as well. *Trench.*

Various Postures Showing Varying Degrees of Respect

The prison where these men are caged from the open air is a pestiferous sty, and their treatment there is cruel and merciless in proportion to the influence of the creditor. The tormentors had other methods, till quite recently, of obtaining money from their victims, such as extracting their teeth and slitting their ears and noses. *William Wright.*

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Did any one ever do you a wrong? Who will tell us about some wrongful thing that was done to him? What did you do about it? Is it natural to want to "pay back"? Is it right? In the Lord's Prayer how do we pray for forgiveness? Do we want always to have God forgive us in the way that we have forgiven others? Do we need to be forgiven often? As a poor criminal in Scotland was being led to the place of execution, to suffer the penalty of death for his crime, he kept crying out, "God is a great Forgiver. God is a great Forgiver." We know that God is ever ready to forgive us, but we know,

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too, that Christ has given us many solemn warnings that we must have a forgiving spirit towards others before we can ask Him to forgive us.

Peter once came to Jesus and asked Him how often he ought to forgive another.

For Older Pupils. De Leon, a distinguished theologian, poet and teacher of Spain, was accused by the Inquisition of translating a part of the Scriptures into Spanish and of criticizing the translation of the Vulgate. For this he was imprisoned in a dark dungeon. On his release at the end of five years he was restored to his professorship. The eager crowd that came to his first lecture was amazed to hear him begin, "Yesterday we were teaching, etc." He was great enough to forget the intervening years of misery. Such greatness seems difficult of attainment, but it is only in accordance with Christ's teachings.

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. The Forgiving Spirit

Ananias and Saul. When we refuse to forgive men their sins we make them doubt the love and mercy of God. Have we forgotten the part which Ananias played in the conversion of Saul of Tarsus? St. Augustine used to say that the Church owed Paul to the prayers of Stephen. Might he not have said, with equal truth, that the Church owed Paul to the forgiveness of Ananias? For three days, without sight, and without food or drink, Saul waited in Damascus, pondering the meaning of the heavenly vision. Then came unto him, sent by God, the man whose life he had meant to take: "Ananias entered into the house, and, laying his hands on him, said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, who appeared unto thee in the way which thou camest, hath sent me." "*Brother* Saul—" How his heart must have leaped within him at the sound of the word! It was the voice from without confirming the voice within; it was the love and forgiveness of man sealing and making sure the love and forgiveness of God. *George Jackson.*

A Noble Professor. Our old professor of theology was a man for whom we had a great veneration—simple, childlike, holy—none had ever known him to be anything else, and that gracious and unfailing sweetness and beauty was to us his natural disposition. To such a man it was no trouble to be always blameless. But one day it chanced that a student came in late to the class, and pushed his way to his seat. The professor stopped to ask gently why he was late. The answer was given somewhat flippantly, an excuse that exaggerated the offense. Instantly the professor's great shaggy eyebrows were lifted, and the lightnings shot from his eyes. Like thunder rolled the words from his lips: "Leave the room, sir." We started in amazement, almost in fright. The culprit crouched away from his place, the door was shut. Then again the pro-

fessor sat in his chair. But the storm was done. With a trembling voice he read the discourse, seeming almost unable to go on. After the lecture we left only to gather in groups and discuss this wonderful thing. Presently came a message that the offender was wanted; and he hastened to the irate professor, expecting an angry reprimand. But there sat the old man in tears.

"My brother," he sobbed, "will you forgive me?"

"No, sir; indeed it is I who should apologize," said the student, overwhelmed.

"No, no, I am the older. Will you forgive me? I am very, very sorry. Say that you forgive me."

The student managed to get out a word or two.

"And you must tell all the students that I have apologized, will you?" and again there was a pause for the promise.

"Now," said the noble old man, "I will go and ask God to forgive me."

Nothing in all that life, nothing in all his words, ever did us so much good as that. We knew then under that gentleness and beauty what fire burned; and every man of us had a new faith, and a new hope, and a new love. *Mark Guy Pearse.*

How Not to Forgive. Some people forgive after the manner of a lemon squeezer. When the last drop of juice by way of apology, explanation, atonement, repentance, has been squeezed out, a reluctant forgiveness is offered, but often offered in such a way that the offending one feels even worse than before. Many people do not seem to know what real forgiveness is. They allow little things to rankle with them. They keep an attic in their hearts, a store-room of affronts and wrongs and injuries, and they often spend much time in going over the slights and offenses which they have received. In the end such people become moody, vindictive, revengeful, cherishing malice, harboring anger, and fomenting all manner of evil. *J. Wesley Johnston.*

Forget. It is a crime against God and man to speak of the sin of a fellow man, if he is now seeking to lead a good life. God forgets, and so should man. In Bavaria, when a man has been convicted of a crime, and has, by imprisonment, paid the penalty, he who speaks or writes of that man's crime is himself punished as a criminal. Are repentant men never to have a chance? *N. D. Hillis.*

II. Our Debt to God

The Lesson of the Parable. The parable clearly implies that we are all God's debtors. Debt, in the New Testament, is a common figure for sin. . . . What is sin? It is either a failure to come up to the standard of God's law, or a transgression of its commands; and he who has committed it is a debtor in the sense of owing satisfaction to that moral code which he has dishonored. Now, in that sense we are all God's debtors;

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for "we have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and we have done those things which we ought not to have done." So much, I suppose, we should all be ready to acknowledge. But do we really mean what we say, when we make such a confession? Have we any "bill of particulars" in our minds at the moment? or do we use the words as a mere form, out of which all significance has long since departed? The question is important, for low views of sin, and false notions as to their own nature of guilt, lie largely at the root of men's indifference to the salvation which God has provided. It is an easy thing to say, "I am a sinner," but it is another thing to feel all that the acknowledgment implies. . . .

We are not only God's debtors, but we have, and we can have, no assets; so that we are hopelessly insolvent. We are not only guilty, but helplessly guilty. The simple truth is just as Toplady has sung it:

"Not the labor of my hands
Can fulfil Thy law's demands;
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone:
Thou must save and Thou alone." *Wm. M. Taylor, Parables.*

What Hast Thou Done for Me? During the French Revolution a prisoner was freed from the Bastile. Walking about the street, a caged bird attracted him, and when he received a few sous from a pitying stranger, he hastened to buy the bird, and opening the cage he set the captive free.

If we realized what our debt to God means as fully as this man realized what imprisonment meant, we would be as eager to serve Him as he was to serve other prisoners.

This is the thought of Frances R. Havergal in her ingenious poem entitled *I Did This for Thee! What Hast Thou Done for Me?*

I spent long years for thee, 1 Tim. 1.15.
In weariness and woe; Isa. 53.3.
That an eternity John 17.24.
Of joy thou mightest know. John 16.22.
I spent long years for thee: John 1.10, 11.
Hast thou spent ONE for Me? 1 Pet. 4.2.

And I have brought to thee, John 4.10, 14.
Down from My home above, John 3.13.
Salvation full and free, Rev. 21.6.
My pardon and My love. Acts 5.31.
Great gifts I brought to thee; Psa. 68.18.
What hast thou brought to Me? Rom. 12.1.

O, let thy life be given, Rom. 6.13.
Thy years for Him be spent, 2 Cor. 5.15.
World-fetters all be riven, Phil. 3.8.
And joy with suffering blent. 1 Pet. 4.13-16.
I gave Myself for thee: Eph. 5.2.
Give thou THYSELF to Me! Prov. 23.28.

Jenny Lind's Debt. A clergyman found Jenny Lind one morning, after having given a charity concert, counting and sealing the money preparatory to distributing it among the poor, and began to compliment her upon her goodness, but she cut him short by saying, "It is the only return I can make to the Lord for His gift bestowed upon me, which is the great joy of my life." Her motive in visiting America was to earn thirty-six thousand pounds to educate the poor children of Stockholm, whose great ignorance and degradation she keenly felt, praying daily to be spared three years to fulfil her plans. *Young England.*

III. Vindictive Temper

Distinction between Resentment and Revenge. In every act of sin there are two distinct steps: there is the rising of a desire which is natural, and, being natural, is not wrong; there is the indulgence of that desire in forbidden circumstances; and that is sin. Let injury, for example, be inflicted, and resentment will arise. It must arise spontaneously. It is as impossible for injustice to be done, and resentment not to follow, as it is for the flesh not to quiver on the application of intense torture. Resentment is but the sense of injustice, made more vivid by its being brought home to ourselves; resentment is beyond our control, so far. There is no sin in this: but let resentment rest there; let it pass into, not justice, but revenge; let it smolder in vindictive feelings till it becomes retaliation, and then a natural feeling has grown into a transgression. The distinction between these two things is clearly marked in the Scriptures. "Be ye angry"—here is the allowance for the human, "and sin not"—here is the point where resentment passes into retaliation. *F. W. Robertson.*

A Vengeful Spirit Harms Its Possessor. The human heart was not made for revenge; for, however sweet it may taste at first, it soon turns all within to gall and wormwood. When you grow older you will find not a few people who, by brooding over real or fancied wrongs, have ruined their health, soured their nature, darkened the very heaven above them, lost the good of life, and spoiled the comfort of their homes. They sank into the habit of writing on the sands all the favors they received, while they graved all their imagined wrongs deep in granite. Anger against those who harm us, injures us more than it can injure them. Very wise is the poet's advice—

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"Nor be thou rageful, like a handled bee,
And lose thy life by usage of thy sting."

John Bunyan had to lie in the jail at Bedford for twelve years, for no other crime than preaching the gospel; and yet so big-hearted was he, that, so far as I remember, he has not written one bitter word against his persecutors. What a triumph of God's grace over the spirit of revenge! In the East Indies there is a beautiful proverb, "A good man is like the sandal wood tree. As it leaves a part of its fragrance on the axe, so he leaves his blessing with the enemy." *James Wells.*

The Quality of Mercy. Among heathens, revenge—"blood revenge" some of them call it—is held to be the first of duties and necessities. For, where law is weak, revenge is the only way of getting justice and protecting life. "If one knew all, one would pardon all," a wise man has said. Many bitter words are wrung from people who have wretched health, crushed hopes, wounded affections, and stinging remorse. They are angry with themselves and with others, rather than with those against whom they hurl their fierce words. Be patient with them, for you might act as they do if you had their sorrows. *James Wells.*

Few people are more to be envied than those who can forgive and forget, who forget even when they are not allowed to forgive, who are nobly silent about the wrongs they receive, who drive away from their souls all the unpleasant things in social life.

A Lesson from Scripture. Nowhere in Scripture, perhaps, have we such a lesson on the difficulty of forgiveness as in the reference to Alexander the coppersmith, in Saint Paul's last letter to Timothy. Even if we read his words in the modified and undoubtedly accurate form in which they are found in the Revised Version, we still feel how far short they come of the standard of Christ. With all the greatness of our regard for the great apostle, we dare not say that he came out of the trial wholly unscathed. Did ever any man come out of such a fire unhurt—any save One? Yet it is not for me to sit in judgment on Saint Paul; only let us remember we have no warrant to hate any man and to hand him over to eternal judgment—even though, like Alexander, he heaps insult and injury, not only on ourselves, but on the cause and church of Christ. *George Jackson.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Bear, forbear, and forgive. *Selected.*
Forgive, and do not forget that you have forgiven.
Love is not to be limited to the multiplication-table. *Philip Schaff.*
It is always easy to forgive other people's enemies. *Chicago Tribune.*
He is below himself that is not above an injury. *Quarles.*
Pray for a short memory as to all unkindness. *Spurgeon.*

He who does not forgive, shuts with his own hands the gate of divine mercy against himself. *St. Augustine.*

Abraham Lincoln's heart was as big as the world, but there was no room in it for the memory of a wrong. *Emerson.*

The law of God, revealed in His word, daily takes account of us, and teaches us to consider the amount of our debt to Him. *Luther.*

To store our memories with a sense of injustice is to fill the chest with rusty iron which was made for refined gold. *Thomas Secker.*

Certainly, in taking revenge, a man is but even with his enemy; but in passing it over, he is superior; for it is a prince's part to pardon. *Bacon.*

When we sin there is something in our act for which we become *liable* to God: formerly He had a claim upon us, now He has a claim against us. *Morrison.*

Just as when a sea-worm perforates the shell of an oyster, the oyster straightway closes the wound with a pearl, so does a forgiving spirit heal the hidden hurt of the heart, and win for itself a boon even at the hands of its foe. *George Jackson.*

Consider this,
That, in the course of justice, none of us
Should see salvation: We do pray for mercy;
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy. *Merchant of Venice.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you. Matt. 5.44.

Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Gal. 6.1.

Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. Matt. 6.12.

For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. Matt. 6.14, 15.

Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. Eph. 4.32.

Thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee. Psa. 86.5.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1.9.

What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people. Psa. 116.12-14.

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A PERSONAL THOUGHT

This word *debt* lays hold of even the most respectable of us. There are certain things we *owe* to God. We owe Him reverence. Have we given it to Him? We owe Him obedience. Have we given it to Him? We owe him service. Have we given it to Him? We owe him love. Have we given it to Him? We owe Him the first place in our thoughts. Have we given it to Him? We owe Him complete self-surrender. Have we given it to Him? How such questions humble us! *J. D. Jones.*

THE LESSON SUMMARY

Impulsive Peter had no doubt often been found fault with; how often did he hear the harsh words of those who misjudged his motives? The rabbis said, forgive another three times; surely seven times would show a most forgiving spirit! But Christ's answer to his question shows that there is no limit to the number of times that he must forgive. Then, to show the vastness of the debt that we owe to God, the smallness of the debt that others owe us, and our duty to forgive even as we have been forgiven, Jesus gave the parable of the Unmerciful Servant. He whose debt of ten thousand talents had been forgiven by the king, seizes a fellow servant who owes him one millionth part as much, and despite entreaties, casts him into prison. The king is exceedingly wroth; he would overlook dishonesty in money matters, but could not brook such villainy, and he hands the inhuman debtor over to the tormentors.

"Take care how you offend me, for I never forgive," said one man to another before John Wesley. "Then," said Wesley, "I hope you never sin; for, with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Here lies one of the dangers of popery, that it holds a doctrine according to which men can free themselves from their guilt by their own merits and works of satisfaction; whereas, the only way to obtain forgiveness of sin is to look to Christ in penitence and faith. *Luther.*

2. Offenses against the law of the land and the welfare of society are not to be passed quietly. Jesus does not mean that we are to allow people to commit thefts and assaults with impunity. All that He means is, that we are to study a generous spirit of mercy and forgiveness toward our brethren. We are to bear much, and put up with much, rather than quarrel. *Wm. E. Ketcham.*

3. Are we to say that every man is a hypocrite who rises from his knees, where he has been confessing his sins, and goes to his business, and there offers a hard face to suppliants, and keeps slights and trespasses well in mind? Many real and imperfect Christians have got the length of look-

ing to the forgiving love of God in Christ as their only hope, but not of looking to it as their imperative example. Their minds are like ocean-going steamers, built in water tight compartments, and the gospel which is stored in one has not reached all the rest. The forgiven, unforgiving servant, has his successor to-day. *Alexander Maclaren.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. What instance have we studied where Jesus made a man decide against himself? (Lesson for April 22, vv. 39-43.) In what way did He do this with the Pharisee of our next lesson? 2. What did Cain mean when he asked, Am I my brother's keeper? (Gen. 4.9.) 3. Tell the story of the rich man and Lazarus. (Luke 16.19-31.) 4. When did Jesus praise a Samaritan? (Luke 17.11-19.) 5. Relate Christ's conversation with the Woman of Samaria at the well. (John 4.1-29.) 6. Read Paul's "Ode on Charity," in 1 Cor. 13. Give Christ's description in Matt. 25.31-46 of the Last Judgment, where He declares that doing or not doing to others is doing or not doing to Him. 8. What were the most important events of the *Third Period of the Galilean Ministry?* 9. Prepare an outline of the events and discourses of this period.

BETWEEN LESSON II AND LESSON III

After the discourse on humility and forgiveness, our knowledge of Christ's life until Lesson VIII of this quarter, is obtained wholly from the Gospels by Luke and John, save for a mention by Matthew and Mark of His final departure from Galilee. As Professor Matthew B. Riddle says in his *Harmony,* "As Luke gives no mention of time, and as John is nowhere parallel to Luke, the chronological arrangement presents many difficulties." Accepting Professor Riddle's chronology, the events between the two lessons, II and III, are as follows: Jesus attended the Feast of Tabernacles at Jerusalem and aroused there continued dissensions between those who believed in Him and those who did not. The Pharisees sought to take Him, but could not because "His hour was not yet come." After His discourse upon Himself as the Light of the World, and upon spiritual freedom, the Jews attempted to stone Him, but He escaped "through the midst of them." (John 7; 8.)

We have now come to *Part VII, The Perean Ministry.* In Perea Jesus had as yet done little work, and He planned a complete tour of the district. After His final departure from Galilee, when "He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem," He sent forth the Seventy on their mission, telling them that "He that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me." "The seventy returned with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils were subject unto us through thy name." (Luke 9.51-56; 10.1-24.)

LESSON III—JULY 15

THE GOOD SAMARITAN

Luke 10.25-37. (Read Matt. 25.31-46; Luke 10.1-24.) Commit vv. 33, 34.

Golden Text

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Matt. 5.7.

Time: November, A. D. 29.
Place: Perea. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 63, 64, and 95.

LESSON TEXT. LUKE 10.25-37

25 And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?
26 He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?
27 And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.
28 And he said unto him, Thou has answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.
29 But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?
30 And Jesus answering said, A certain *man* went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded *him,* and departed, leaving *him* half dead.
31 And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.
32 And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked *on him,* and passed by on the other side.
33 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion *on him.*
34 And went to *him,* and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.
35 And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave *them* to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.
36 Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?
37 And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go and do thou likewise.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

25. *Lawyer.* Another name for *scribe.* *Tempted.* Tested. *What shall I do to inherit eternal life?* The meaning seems to have been, What great thing shall I do?

26. *How readest thou?* This form was used by the rabbis to call out a quotation from Scripture. *How* means to what purpose. *Riddle.*

27. *And thy neighbour as thyself.* From Lev. 19.18.

29. *Willing to justify himself.* Wishing to put himself in the right. *Who is my neighbour?* He points out that the answer is not adequate, because there is doubt as to the meaning of "one's neighbor." *Plummer.*

30. *From Jerusalem to Jericho,* a distance of seventeen miles. *Thieves,* R. V., *robbers.*

31. *By chance.* God's unseen providence, by men nicknamed chance; or, as the Greeks called it, the daughter of Forethought. *Farrar.*

32. *A Levite.* The family of Aaron were priests; the rest of the tribe of Levi assisted the priests in the service of the temple and were supported by tithes from the people.

34. *Oil and wine.* Household remedies in the East. The two were mixed and used as a salve for wounds. *To an inn.* The Greek word here is not the same as the one used for an inn in chapter 2.7 in the lesson about the Birth of Christ. That was a khan, a group of buildings; this was a Greek type of inn with a host as landlord.

35. *Two pence.* Two Roman denarii, thirty to thirty-four cents, a sum sufficient to supply his wants for several days.

36. *Was,* R. V., *proved.*

37. *He that shewed mercy on him.* He will not name the Samaritan by name, the haughty hypocrite. *Luther.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

25. *Tempted him.* Our Lord ignored the attempt on Himself, and instead, answering the question dogmatically, told a story. It boldly stormed every principle of His enemy, for its hero was one who was considered an outcast, and its delinquents were a priest and a Levite, two of the pillars of his system. But it searched his heart, enlisted his sympathies, and commanded his imitation. The lawyer was affronted, but the man was won. *George Adam Smith.*

29. *Who is my neighbour?* The word *neighbour* is from the German *nach-bauer,* that is, near-dweller. The Romans had only one word, *hostis,* by which to characterize a stranger and an enemy. To the Greeks, all but themselves were barbarians. A shipwrecked sailor on the coast of Britain was doomed without ceremony to the altar. Thus to the non-Christian thought of the world, the only neighbor was the near-dweller, the man who lived next door. There are persons in Christian communi-

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ties who cherish the same idea, but it is distinctly at odds with our Saviour's idea. *David James Burrell.*

32. *And likewise a Levite.* No doubt they did, in some way or other, justify their neglect to their own consciences; made excuses to themselves, as that where one outrage had happened, there was danger of another—that the robbers could not be far distant, and might return at any moment—or that the sufferer was beyond all human help—or that one found near him might himself be accused as his murderer. The priest, we may imagine, said he could not tarry; the service of the temple must not wait, must not be left incomplete during his absence; and why should he? was not the Levite just behind? . . . And then the Levite in his turn may have thought within himself, that it could not be incumbent on him to undertake a perilous office, from which the priest had just shrunk. *Trench, Parables.*

You can see him standing there on the Jericho road. He was not quite so brutally cold as the priest. He would have hotly condemned a man who passed on without a glance of pity for such distress. He came and looked down on the suffering traveler. He inquired his name, perhaps. How many robbers were there? How much of your money did they get? Are you suffering much pain from those ugly wounds in your head? It is outrageous that the Roman Government does not ferret out the highwaymen that lurk in these rocks! Then, having got all the particulars so that he could relate them to his friends that night, and having expressed his great regret that such things were permitted in this wicked world, he passed by on the other side.

You have met this man. He is not always a Levite. Sometimes there are first-class cabin passengers that will ask permission to go down into the steerage, where the poor emigrants, in their first stages of loneliness and seasickness, in the meagerness and discomfort of their situation, are indeed objects of pity. They will openly exclaim over the lot of these poor creatures until they bring down the wrath of the captain on their heads and are shut out of all parts of the ship but their own. *Charles R. Brown.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

26. *What is written in the law?* Perhaps Jesus, as He said this, pointed to one of the phylacteries that the lawyer wore on his forehead and wrist. These phylacteries were little leather boxes, varying in size from an ordinary hazelnut, to that of a large walnut. In these leather boxes were little parchment rolls containing certain texts from the Pentateuch. Certainly the first of the two great rules, that concerning God, was one of these texts (Deut. 6.5); possibly, but not certainly, the second concerning the neighbor formed another text. *H. D. M. Spence.*

29. *Who is my neighbour?* The Jews were "contrary to all men,"

said Paul. "They are famous for their hatred of the human race," said Tacitus. Only a Jew was "neighbor" of a Jew. "If a Jew sees a Gentile fall into the sea, it is not his duty to pull him out. It is indeed written, 'Thou shalt not be guilty of the blood of thy neighbor;' but such an one is not thy neighbor," said Maimonides.

"In our Lord's time to call a man 'A Samaritan' was as bad as to call him a demoniac," says Farrar. "Samaritans were regarded as excommunicate and accursed; they were denied all share in the resurrection; it was doubtful whether it was lawful to partake of any of the produce of their soil; to eat their bread was like eating the flesh of swine."

The merchant is expected to sell cheaper and the doctor to lower his fees to those in the neighborhood, though they may have no acquaintance with them, and even the European manager of the Waterworks Company will be urged to reduce the rate for those who live near his dwelling place. Oriental neighborhood enlarges the family, but contracts the world. It is a trades union on family lines. Any one outside the circle is a foreigner, alien, enemy, heathen. *Mackie.*

30. *Fell among thieves.* Josephus more than once mentions the extent to which Palestine in these later days was infested with banditti; and from St. Jerome we learn that the road leading from one of these cities to the other was at one place called the Red or the Bloody Way, from the blood that had been there shed; that in his own time there was in this wilderness a fort with a Roman garrison, for the protection of travelers. *Trench.*

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

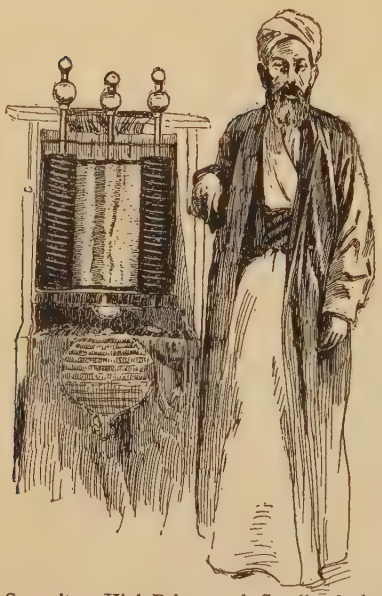
For Younger Pupils. Review the parable of the Unmerciful Servant, and emphasize his unmercifulness. We would naturally expect the man to be only too glad to "pass the kindness on."

You know that in China a young girl is cruelly treated by her husband's mother, whose slave she practically becomes as soon as she is married. Would you not think that when her own son brings home a wife she would wish to spare her such suffering as she has endured? On the contrary, she seems to take as great delight in making her suffer as did her husband's mother before her.

The ancient Romans used to take their old and sick and infirm to an island in the Tiber and leave them there to perish miserably.

All these examples show you how different have been and still are the unmerciful customs of lands that are not Christian from the merciful practices of our own land. Mercy is especially a Christian virtue. It is a virtue that Christ taught in many ways. What did He say about it in one of the beatitudes? This is our Golden Text to-day.

For Older Pupils. At the present day, there are only about two hundred Samaritans. Their little community is clustered about the



Samaritan High-Priest and Scroll of the Law

base of their sacred mountain, Gerizim. This sect, as you know, accepts only the first five books of the Bible, the Pentateuch. For twenty-three centuries "the Jews have had no dealings with the Samaritans," but at the World's Sunday-school Convention held in Jerusalem in 1904, a Samaritan high-priest addressed the convention in his own language, a dialect of the ancient Hebrew, and a Jew, standing beside him, translated his words into English and then cordially shook the Samaritan's hand.

There is a sharp contrast between this friendly scene and the spirit that prevailed in Christ's day, which is brought out in our lesson about the Good Samaritan. "The parable may seem to us like a beautiful painting, but it is like one of those pictures in the Interpreter's House, which gleamed terror on the soul of the Pilgrim, making him to tremble like an aspen-leaf."

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. Who is My Neighbor

The Fatherhood of God Means the Brotherhood of Man. In Japanese writing, two curved sticks balanced against each other form the character that stands for the word *man*. One curved stick can not stand of itself, the Japanese explain, neither can one person live in this world alone; it is only by getting and giving help that man lives. That we Americans have not all grasped this thought of the Japanese is well shown by Phillips Brooks.

"Meet one of those boys upon the street who were born and have grown up in luxury," he says. "Stop him an instant and point him to a poor, wretched cripple toiling along under a heavy burden with poverty in every line of his poor, haggard face. Ask your bright, glittering young friend what it means that that poor creature is so poor—why he should not in some way help him?—and there is something infinitely sad and touching in the transparent honesty with which he looks you in the face and tells you that it is no affair of

his. That it is his business to undertake personally with thought and care, the relief of that poor sufferer!—you might as well tell him that it is his place to go and find the sources of the Nile. . . .

"It is once more the earliest world, outside the gates of Eden. Abel lies dead upon the ground, and Cain is fleeing red-handed from the murder. But there is a third presence there. God is there. It is His voice that asks, 'Where is Abel thy brother?' And what a right He has to ask! It is the Father asking for His murdered child!

"Is this not the great final truth about it all?—that within the Fatherhood of God we are to know—there only can we fully know—our brotherhood to one another? We neglect our brethren because we are so far from God. Within His love may we all learn to love our neighbors as ourselves, and to forget ourselves in serving them!"

A Certain Man. This certain man is the one whom you have it in your power to help. Not to talk grandly and enthusiastically about compassion for all mankind in general is Jesus' counsel, but to direct that compassion to a certain man who is in need of your help. That certain man is usually nearer than we think. Jacob Riis tells the story of a Secretary of a Foreign Mission Board who asked him to find a poor widow with five children the ages of his own children, that the two families might be mutually helpful to each other. He wished each of his children to be interested in another child that was growing up along with him. Mr. Riis searched long for the right family, and at last found it in an East-Side tenement. The brave mother was supporting her large family by scrubbing in an office building. And where was that building? It was the very building where this Mission Secretary had his office, and it was his own floor where she worked! They were neighbors in very truth, each capable of service to the other, each needing the other, and they did not know it.

Which Proved Neighbor unto Her? In a certain tenement of the worst kind there was a family in direst need. The man was a drunkard. His wife had "seen better days." When the neighbors found out her plight, the most extraordinary season of plenty set in under that roof. At every meal hour some one called at the door of the H—'s, begging the acceptance of this or that article of food "left over." When Mrs. H— finally saw through the subterfuges, and protested that they were depriving themselves to help her, the answer she got was a half-shamed, "Oh, never mind! You can't stand it as we can, and anyway we don't want to see you come down." For "come down" read "ask public relief." They did not see it. The woman got upon her feet. She had known better days—had friends then, who, now that she lived in a tenement—and such a tenement—passed by on the other side. "Which of these, thinkest thou, proved neighbor unto her?" *Jacob A. Riis.*

Third Quarter Lesson III July 15

II. Blessed are the Merciful, For They Shall Obtain Mercy

What It Means to be Merciful. To be merciful is not to do an act of mercy here and there; to be swept away, on impulse, into forgiveness of a wrong; to be pitiful on Monday and hard on Tuesday; to forget you have been injured, and then, in moments of irritation, to remember it again and reimpose the penalty or speak again the bitter word. No; to be truly merciful is to have the temper all through life, from morning to night, which is pitiful of wrong and forgiving of injury. *Stopford A. Brooke.*

The quality of mercy is not strained;
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath. It is twice blest;
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes:
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest: it becomes
The throned monarch better than his crown;
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;
But mercy is above this sceptred sway,
It is enthroned in the heart of kings,
It is an attribute to God Himself;
And earthly power doth then shew likest God's
When mercy seasons justice. *Merchant of Venice.*

Lack of Mercy often Comes from Lack of Thought. "You know that a little thought and a little kindness are often worth more than a great deal of money," says Ruskin. It is the lack of this little thought that accounts for so much of the misery there is in the world. General David S. Stanley was one time leading a force of two thousand men across our great plains, when suddenly he gave the order "Left oblique!" At once all swung to the left, men and horses and heavily laden wagons, and as they passed they saw on the ground a nest full of birds, above which the mother bird fluttered and chirped in great anxiety. General Stanley's heart was full of love and mercy for all God's helpless creatures, and his was the quick thought that would prevent wanton destruction of even little birds.

Contrast with this action of Stanley's that of the boy whom Doctor Guthrie condemns but partly condones because he had not been taught better. "The boy who, catching a poor fluttering insect, impales it, and then with eager eye watches it spin round and round, may not be of a cruel disposition. This barbarous and apparently cruel act may be entirely due to ignorance. The child does not know the pain that it inflicts; and may just illustrate in the nursery what is so often illustrated by older

people in the world, how in miseries unrelieved, feelings wounded, and the poor neglected, more ill is done for want of thought than for want of heart."

Kind Means Kinned. Charity of thought is not merely to be exercised toward the poor; it is to be exercised toward all men. *Ruskin.*

Some people are white, others black, brown, yellow, red, or copper-colored. The white races are just now the most powerful, and whites are thus tempted to despise others. But it was not always so: the Egyptians and Arabs once ruled the world. Children in our streets sometimes gather round foreigners, and reproach them for their color. Some white men in India and Africa behave most shamefully to their colored fellow citizens, and make their lives bitter.

"Kind" is a shortened form of "kinned," and teaches us that as all are of the same kind, they should be kind to one another. For God has fashioned our hearts alike. *James Wells.*

Ye Have Done It unto Me. In the old Dominican Convent of St. Marc there are wonderful frescoes of Fra Angelico. The fresco over the door leading into the room where the Brothers received strangers depicts a pilgrim, worn and weary, leaning heavily upon his staff. On one side a Brother supports his elbow, on the other another Brother holds his hand tenderly. The faces of both are full of loving compassion for this, their way-worn Brother. The conventional halo round the Pilgrim's head shows the artist's thought that this seeming way-worn stranger is none other than Christ Himself being welcomed by the merciful Brothers.

III. Go, and Do Thou Likewise

Why Some Pass by on the Other Side. "Woe be to you if, preoccupied like priest or Levite with theories of what a neighbor should be, you leave the fact alone and pass by on the other side," says Doctor George Adam Smith. "None of us can forget how the mere fear of doing something uncommon has often stayed our hands and crushed our rising hearts in a way which has left us feeling mean and cowardly for many a day after; but which, if persisted in, renders us in time cruelly callous."

A lost child is crying on the street, but it is awkward to be seen leading a dirty crying child home, so we refuse to notice that the child is lost; a man is lying as if he were ill, but he may only be intoxicated, and it looks foolish to meddle, and may be troublesome, so we leave him to others, though another minute in that position may, for all we know, make the difference between life and death. You read a paragraph of a paper giving a thrilling account of a famine in China, or some other great calamity; but when you come to a clause intimating that subscriptions will be received at such and such a place, you pass to another column, and refuse to allow that to make the impression on your mind which you feel it is beginning to make. *Marcus Dods.*

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"Alas for the rarity of Christian charity under the sun!"—and alas for the multitude of plausible, prudent reasons by which that rarity can be accounted for! *A. B. Bruce.*

We Must Follow Christ's Example. Most religions are meant to be straight lines, connecting two points — God and man. If man can be right with God, if he can please and pacify Him, all will be well. But Christianity has three points—God and man and his brother, with two lines that make a right angle. Each one of us is at the point of the angle, looking up to God and out to our brother. What God sends down the perpendicular line we must pass on along the horizontal. If one hand goes up to God, the other must go out to his neighbor, our brother.

That is the way Jesus stood, the Son of God and the Brother of men. What God gave Him, He gave us. "All things that I have had of my Father I have made known unto you." So He expects us to do. "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." *Maltbie Babcock.*

Train Your Sympathy and Your Helpfulness. When Lord Ray said, "May God mend all," Sir David Ramsay replied, "Nay, nay, Donald; but we must help Him to mend it."

The whole parable is but an amplification of the Golden Rule, Go and do to others as you would have them do to you, were the circumstances reversed and your places changed. . . . Train your eye to watch for others' needs. Train your soul to sympathy, and your hand to helpfulness. He who lifts another's load, who soothes another's smart, who brightens a life that else would be dark, who puts music within a brother's soul, though it may be only for a passing moment, wakes even a sweeter music within his own, for he enters on earth into his Master's joy, the joy of the redeeming, self-sacrificing love. *Henry Burton.*

Oh brother man! fold to thy heart thy brother;
Where pity dwells, the peace of God is there;
To worship rightly is to love each other,
Each smile a hymn, each kindly deed a prayer.

Follow with reverent steps the great example
Of Him whose holy work was "doing good";
So shall the wide earth seem our Father's temple,
Each loving life a psalm of gratitude. *Whittier.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Love alone can determine who is your neighbor. *Marcus Dods.*

We hand folks over to God's mercy, and show none ourselves. *George Eliot.*

The condition of our fellow citizens is the test of the measure of our faith in Christ. *William T. Stead.*

Every person is near to you whom you can bless: he is nearest whom you can bless most. *Channing.*

A great deal of fine sentiment is too languid to drive any wheels of conduct. *Maclaren.*

If I were to declare that A is in trouble, B would instantly reply, "C ought to go and help him." *Sydney Smith.*

I expect to pass through this way but once: if there is any kindness or any good thing I can do to my fellow beings, let me do it now. *William Penn.*

If thou neglectest thy love to thy neighbor, in vain thou professest thy love to God; for by thy love to God the love to thy neighbor is begotten, and by thy love to thy neighbor thy love to God is nourished. *Francis Quarles.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. Matt. 5.17.

Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. Luke 6.36.

He shall have judgment without mercy that hath shewed no mercy. Jas. 2.13.

Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. Gal. 6.2.

Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another. Rom. 12.10.

But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? 1 John 3.17.

Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets. Matt. 7.12.

I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive. Acts 20.35.

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. Gal. 3.28.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

If you encountered a police official who carefully avoided all dangerous and troublesome interference, would you not be apt to challenge his right to retain his post? But might we not turn our challenge on ourselves, and say to ourselves, Why are you a Christian? What do you unite yourself to Christ for? Is it not that you may be able to do good, to be helpful, to become salt of the earth, and of exceptional value among men? If, then, you shrink from all exceptional duty, from all that

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calls for trouble and real sacrifice, from all that puts you seriously about, what is the good of your Christianity? Where does it go? *Marcus Dods.*

THE LESSON SUMMARY

The story of the Good Samaritan is a story of such exquisite completeness that one is tempted to study it as a work of art, and to prize each phrase as a separate gem. The fundamental beauty of the story, however, lies in the setting of all these details round one central lesson. The lawyer, after quoting from the earlier social legislation the saying, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," goes on to ask from Jesus an interpretation of this law of friendliness. Jesus replies that the test of friendship is in the painstaking quality, the wise adaptation, and the continuity of friendly service. There lies by the roadside what modern charity would call a "case," a stranger, stripped, half dead, and in need of a friend. Neither the priest nor the Levite, it may be believed, are brutal. They hurry by because they know that the friendship which the case demands means an expenditure of more time and trouble than they can afford. Both are on their way to important duties. Either of them would gladly report the "case" to the proper authorities at Jerusalem, but their own time and their own personal services are precisely what they can not spare, and they pass by on the other side. The Samaritan also is in haste. Up that hot and shadeless valley he is driving his beast, laden with oil and wine for the Jerusalem bazaars. His compassion, however, conquers his prudence. He halts, goes to the stranger, assuages his wounds, lifts him on his own beast, brings him to a wayside inn, provides for his care, and gives assurance that he shall not be forgotten. Nothing can describe with more precision the exact program which scientific charity has by degrees worked out to guide the visitation of the poor—first, friendly compassion, then the relief of temporary necessity, then the transfer of the case to restorative conditions, finally the use of money, not as alms for the helpless, but to maintain continuity of relief. *Francis Greenwood Peabody,* in *Jesus Christ and the Social Question.*

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. What were the characteristics and the results of the third period of the Galilean Ministry?

2. Ask God, not only for obedience and fidelity, but for courage and inventiveness. For the want of them it is that the real needs of men are to-day so often passed by. *George Adam Smith.*

3. Beside all the pain at seeing how men disown the care of their fellows, there is another pain which is often yet more painful as we see how men who do attempt to help their brethren, help them all wrong,

with such ignorant and clumsy hands that they do them more harm than good. Meddlesomeness, arrogance, foolish indulgence, wanton severity, wooden insistence upon a way of goodness which God never meant for the man whom you are trying to make good, opposition to good impulses because they happen to be in other lines than yours, fussiness, suspicion, jealousy, all of these evils come in and others with them, to make sometimes worse than worthless the most sincere desire of some good man to help and guide his neighbor. *Phillips Brooks.*

4. The business world has as the representative of the man in trouble the laboring man, and its axioms are that labor itself is a commodity, that it is subject to the laws of demand and supply, and that it is to be bought in the cheapest market and sold in the dearest—a doctrine which, apart from its economic unsoundness, is clearly at odds with the Golden Rule. *Williams.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. When our prayer is answered, should this strengthen our faith in God? When it is not answered, should this weaken our faith? 2. What prayers will God not answer? (Those of His enemies, prayers for help in carrying out evil designs, for harm to others, all prayers that are not in accordance with His will.) 3. Why should we pray? 4. What lesson already studied taught the value of persevering prayer? (June 3.) 4. Give the parable of the Unjust Judge (Luke 18.1-7) and compare it with that of the Selfish Neighbor in our next lesson. 5. In what lesson did we learn that the Eastern loaf of bread resembles a stone? (Feb. 4.) 6. Compare the Lord's Prayer as given by Matthew in the Sermon on the Mount (6.9-13) with that given by Luke 11.2-4. 7. Read Psalms 34.1-17 and 145.10-21, and commit to memory the verses you like best.

BETWEEN LESSON III AND LESSON IV

At the home of Martha and Mary in Bethany Jesus commended Mary for choosing "the good part"—sitting at His feet to hear His message. On the Sabbath day Jesus gave sight to the man born blind, and the miracle displeased the Pharisees. To them He uttered the parable of the Good Shepherd. "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. . . . And other sheep I have which are not of this fold."

The Jews gathered around Jesus in the temple at the Feast of Dedication, and, angered at His claims to be the Son of God, tried to stone Him, but He escaped. He went beyond Jordan to Perea, and "many believed on Him there." (Luke 10.38-42; John 9.10.)

JESUS TEACHING HOW TO PRAY

Luke 11.1-13. (Read Luke 10.1-23 and 38-42; 18.1-14.) Commit vv. 9, 10.

Golden Text

Lord, teach us to pray. Luke 11.1.

Time: January, A. D. 30.
Place: Perea. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 65, 66, 70, 71.

LESSON TEXT. LUKE 11.1-13

1 And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.
2 And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name, Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.
3 Give us day by day our daily bread.
4 And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.
5 And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves;
6 For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him?
7 And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee.
8 I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.
9 And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.
10 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.
11 If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if *he ask* a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?
12 Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?
13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *In a certain place.* Because Jesus often sought a mountain for prayer, the Mount of Olives has been suggested as the place. *One of his disciples.* This may have been, as Meyer suggests, a later disciple who had not heard the Sermon on the Mount. This model prayer seems to be an abbreviated form of the one given by Matthew in the Sermon. *John.* John the Baptist.

2. *Hallowed.* Reverenced, counted holy.

7. *Trouble me not.* The half-vexed tone is true to nature. The one asked is selfish, and his reluctance is real. But God's reluctance is apparent only, and even this appearance arises from reasons which work for our best good. This contrast is borne out by v. 13. *Riddle. I cannot.* I will not.

8. *Importunity.* The Greek verb means literally *shamelessness.* "The argument of this parable is: 'If selfish man can be won by prayer and importunity to give, much more certainly shall the bountiful Lord bestow.'" *Trench.*

9. *Asketh, seeketh, knocketh.* Note the climax—request, earnest desire, perseverance.

11. *A stone.* A loaf of bread was shaped like a stone. *Serpent.* An eel resembles a fish.

12. *A scorpion.* When its limbs are closed round it, a scorpion is egg-shaped. The meaning here is, that in answer to prayer God gives neither what is useless (a stone) nor what is harmful (a serpent or scorpion). *Plummer.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

2. *Our Father.* Note well the first word in the Lord's Prayer—that little word *our.* A German writer on the Lord's Prayer quotes this verse from an old Socinian hymn book: "Give rain and sunshine to Greiz, Schleiz, and Lobenstein; and if others also wish them, they can ask for themselves." If our hearts go up in true prayer to God, they must also go out in warm affection to all men. *James Wells.*

2. *Hallowed be thy name.* God's name is God's nature, or rather the little bit of it we can know. God's name stands for God Himself. What you do to the name, you do to God. Hallowed is just *holyed;* that is, held and treated as holy, honored as is meet. In this petition we pray against all idolatry and against profaning and neglecting God's name, and we pray for hallowing the great name. . . . Every act of worship is a hallowing of His name, and some ways of worship have more hallowing in them than others. During worship in the early Church, the pastor used to cry out, "*Sursum corda:* Lift your hearts to Heaven"; and also "*Hoc age:* Do this thing; put all your soul into it." Worship means

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worthy-ship: it is the way of publicly owning the infinite worthiness of the All-worthy.

More than eight hundred years ago a new kingdom came to England. William the Conqueror then drove out the Saxon king. The nobles fought against him, but at last they saw that it was useless. One noble came after another, bowed low before the Conqueror's throne, laid down his sword and shield, the weapons of his rebellion, kissed the king's hand, and said *"Devenio vester homo,* I become your man." This is the origin of the word *homage.* Each of us by yielding should become Christ's man, and pay homage to him. *James Wells.*

2. *Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done.* When we pray, "Thy kingdom come," we immediately add, "thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6.10.) This latter petition I understand to be Christ's interpretation of the former. A little later in the same discourse (Sermon on the Mount) He added: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father (Matt. 7.21). He enters into the kingdom, or the kingdom enters into him (which is the same thing), who does God's will. It follows, then, that the kingdom comes here in the earth just so fast as God's will is done in earth as it is in Heaven; that is, perfectly. *Josiah Strong.*

3. *Our daily bread.* I have read somewhere that when the month of August comes round the world is each year within two months of famine; the world's granaries at that time contain only eight weeks' supply of corn. How forcibly such a fact preaches the truth of our dependence upon God! *J. D. Jones.*

> Give us this day our daily bread, we pray,
> And give us likewise, Lord, our daily thought,
> That our poor souls may strengthen as they ought,
> And starve not on the husks of yesterday. *Phillips Brooks.*

4. *Forgive us our sins. . . . indebted to us.* It is characteristic of Jesus that He habitually interprets God's nature by all that is best in man's. He does this specifically in the Lord's Prayer, when He bases man's hope of divine forgiveness on man's willingness to forgive his brother. *William J. Dawson.*

Lead us not into temptation. The old story of the fight between the English and the Scotch at Bannockburn says that Bruce, on the night before the battle, honeycombed the ground in front of his army with pitfalls, each of which contained a hidden stake, and then covered them up again with the green turf. In the morning the English cavalry, when it charged upon the Scottish troops, found that the ground, which looked so firm and solid, was deceitful and treacherous; and, falling into those hidden pitfalls, horse and rider met their fate.

Does life look to you in prospect like a firm, safe road? At every step you take you need to beware of some secret pitfall. No one is exempt from temptation. *J. D. Jones.*

Satan desires us, great and small,
As wheat to sift us, and we all,
Are tempted;
Not one, however rich or great,
Is by his station or estate
Exempted. *Longfellow.*

The Doxology. The doxology, which in the Authorized Version closes the prayer as given by Matthew, has been omitted from the Revised Version. It is not found in the Greek manuscripts. The early church used this doxology, which grandly states why we worship the Father, at the close of many prayers, and in some of the manuscripts it was doubtless a later addition to the Lord's Prayer.

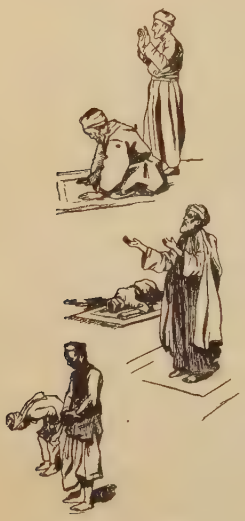
13. *If ye give good gifts unto your children.* Could you call Rousseau a real father who dropped his children one after another as they were born, into the box at the Foundlings' Home, and never heard nor cared to hear any more about them? In a physical sense the men summoned by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children are fathers, but in the higher moral and spiritual sense they are not fathers at all. Fatherhood, whether divine or human, implies the outgoing of the father's nature to the children—the adoption of means to guide the children's life and to waken response to the father's love. There are those, however, who seem to think that the Divine Fatherhood can be a thing apart—suspended in mid-air, with no connection with the children of earth. The Fatherly heart can not be thus self-contained, it must reach out by all possible avenues to men. *W. Garrett Horder.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

1. *Teach us how to pray.* The rabbinical directions for prayer included prescriptions in details of dress, posture, time and place, as well as of tone, manner, and phrasing; basing each injunction on some supposed command of Scripture. Thus, for example, the direction to sway the body to and fro, while calling on the Lord, is said to be in accordance with Psalms 35.10: "All my bones shall say, Lord."

With such an idea of prayer, the request, "Teach us to pray," has a well-defined technical meaning throughout the East. Our dragoman came to me one evening on the desert, and told me that he had been teaching a group of the Tawarah Bedouins to pray. And when, after much experimenting, his pupils were sufficiently drilled to go through the ritual without blunders, their teacher seemed as well satisfied with the

results as the average teacher would be when all his class could repeat the titles, topics, and golden texts of the last quarter's lessons. There are various postures in every form of prayer in the East. An Oriental would not think of remaining standing, or kneeling, or prostrate, during an entire prayer. He would take one position in one portion of his prayer, another in another, and so on. *H. Clay Trumbull.*



Attitudes at Prayer

5-8. *The Parable of the Selfish Neighbor.* The arrival of a friend unexpectedly at midnight was not an uncommon occurrence, for in that country people often traveled by night to escape the great heat of the day. Nor was it unusual to have no bread in the house at that time. Only enough bread for the day was baked every morning.

A bedstead was a very unusual article of furniture. Some houses had a raised platform on one side of the room upon which the family slept. The poorest people slept upon skins, or even the bare floor, and their only covering was the outer garments which they wore during the day.

"The furniture of the house was extremely simple. What we call comfort, was absolutely unknown to the Orientals. In Palestine people lived in the open air, and the house of a poor man was as bare and comfortless as that of the poorest Arab in our day. It consisted of one room, which served all purposes—kitchen, bedroom, workshop; even the cattle sometimes shared the same shelter. The house had no chimney, and when it was cold, all that was done was to light a fire in the large brazier in the middle of the room. *Edmond Stapfer, Palestine in the Time of Christ.*

11, 12. Bread, dried fish, and hard boiled eggs are ordinary food in the East. It is probable that some of those pairs of words, especially "a stone for a loaf," were proverbial expressions. "A scorpion for a fish" seems to have been a Greek proverb. *Plummer.*

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. A little boy who had become man enough to go to school, was asked if he ever cried over his lessons. "Sometimes," said Tommy. "Why, do you find that it helps you?" "No," he replied, "but it brings somebody else to help me." We have our hard lessons in the book of life, black-board lessons of trouble, and copies we can not understand. Does crying help us? Perhaps not; but it brings some one else to help us—the Master, our Father. *William Luff.*

For Older Pupils. The prayer which our Lord taught His disciples to pray, because of its beauty, its spirituality, its broad, loving charity, has well deserved the names "Epitome of the Gospels" and "Pearl of Prayers." It is one of the familiar things of life, and our very familiarity with it may have dulled our sense of its beauty. Frequent usage may have dimmed our perception of its sweet simplicity. There is danger of its becoming on our lips a mere form of words.

I would like, if I can, to reveal to you some of its wonder and beauty and glory. There are in this old familiar prayer, heights we have never scaled, depths we have never sounded. I want, if I can, to help you to realize its meaning, to feel its power, to grasp the sweep of its demands, so that this—the most familiar of all prayers — may be on your lips fresh, real, vital; so that we may pray, not with lips only but with the understanding also, so that when we use those sacred words, whether it be in public or in private, we may not simply repeat the Lord's Prayer, but really and truly *pray*. *J. D. Jones.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. Teach us to Pray

The Model Prayer. We may call this form the alphabet of all possible prayers. It contains in all six petitions, of which three—the first three, as is meet—refer to God's glory, and the remaining three to man's good. We are taught to pray, first for the advent of the divine kingdom, in the form of universal reverence for the divine name, and universal obedience to the divine will; and then, in the second place, for daily bread, pardon, and protection from evil for ourselves. *A. B. Bruce.*

For What Shall We Pray? A man once besought Alexander the Great for a gift of money, and was told to go to the treasurer and ask whatever sum he pleased. The treasurer refused to pay the enormous sum asked without first consulting the king. Going to Alexander, the treasurer advised him not to pay this. "Let him have it all," said Alexander. "I like that man, for he does me honor. He treats me like a king, and proves, by the largeness of his demand, that he believes me to be both rich and generous." We should treat our heavenly Father like a king, and go to Him with all our needs.

"We treat God with irreverence by banishing Him from our thoughts," says Ruskin, "not by referring to His will on slight occasions. His is not the finite authority or intelligence which can not be troubled with small things. There is nothing so small but that we may honor God by asking His guidance of it, or insult Him by taking it into our own hands."

"There are two things to remember about prayer for earthly things," says Canon Farrar; "one, that to ask mainly for earthly blessings is a

dreadful dwarfing and vulgarization of the grandeur of prayer, as though you asked for a handful of grass, when you might ask for a handful of emeralds; the other that you must always ask for earthly desires with absolute submission of your own will to God's."

What We Shall Not Pray For. A small girl was discovered by her mother lying in the middle of a muddy garden path. She was urged to get up, but refused.

"I'm waiting," she placidly remarked.

"What for?" asked her mother.

"For God to pick me up," the young person answered. "I falled down and I pwayed God pick me up, and He doesn't do it vewy quick."

Her mother explained to her that she might lie there all day before God worked a miracle for her lazy little self, that He had given her sturdy arms and legs, an intelligent brain, the power of picking herself up, and He expected her to answer her own prayer. *War Cry.*

The True Spirit of Prayer. There should be less prayer that seeks to bring God to see things as we see them, and do things as we want them, and more of the kind that seeks to see things as God sees them, and seeks strength to do the things that God would have us do, and to meet bravely and faithfully our duties in life. *Youth's Companion.*

II. The Need of Prayer

General Gordon's Need. During General Gordon's journey in the Soudan country, a white handkerchief lay for half an hour each morning outside his tent. To the whole camp this was a signal that Gordon was at prayer. No one, no message, however important, could interrupt this communion.

There Can be No Christian Life without Prayer. Cut that great main which leads the water from the reservoir into yonder city, and how long will it be ere the city is in distress? Prayer is the medium of communion with God, and without that communion there is no Christian living; and so the hymn has not put it too strongly:—

"Prayer is the Christian's *vital breath.*"

There is no life without God, and no contact with God without prayer: so that, if Satan can cut that main, the life is in his power. *Marvin R. Vincent.*

For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?

Tennyson.

Prayer Gives Strength. There is truth in the scene depicted in *Faust* where Mephistopheles, rushing forward with drawn sword, lowers

the point and shudders at the sound of ascending praise from reverent human souls.

President Lincoln once said, "I have been driven many times to my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go; my own wisdom and that of all around me seemed insufficient for the day."

The Meaning of the Children's Prayer. From the *Youth's Companion* comes this story of how a judge learned the meaning and value of prayer. While he was abroad one summer, his little three-year-old boy stayed with his grandmother. The first night of his return, as he was carrying the little fellow off to bed, the child kept saying, "So' keep! So' keep, fader, *so'* keep!" "He wants to say his prayer, that's his name for 'Now I lay me,'" was the explanation of "so' keep." Then the father knelt by the crib with the baby boy and heard him say,

"Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep."

The words clung to the judge. "So' keep! So' keep, fader!" repeated themselves over and over to him through the day. It was a new name for prayer, new and strangely vital. "Soul keep," he mused. "Does prayer mean that? Does it mean anything—more than petition, than thanksgiving; more than a mere audience with God to make known our needs? Do I need to pray that God may keep *my* soul?" The words affected him strangely; they would not leave his thoughts until he was led to pray and commit his own soul to his Father's keeping.

III. Prayer is Answered

How Can Our Prayers Reach God? Can we understand how our poor prayers can move Heaven and earth? We can not. Neither can we realize how the brain can send messages to the finger tips, teaching them to execute wisely and deftly the most delicate, intricate job. But every day we send these silent messages that result in things being done; and every day prayers go up to our Father which result in great things. *Children's Friend.*

We Must Fulfil the Conditions. A great many prayers are born of selfishness and are too much like dictation or command. None of God's promises is unconditional; and we have no such assets to our credit that we have a right to draw our checks and demand that God shall pay them. The indisputable quality of all right asking is a right spirit toward our heavenly Father.

The second trait of a prevailing prayer is that it aims at the mark, and knows what it is after. When we enter a store or shop we ask the salesman to hand us the particular article we want. There is an enormous amount of pointless, prayerless praying.

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In the next place, the prayer that has power with God must be a *prepaid* prayer. If we expect a letter to reach its destination, we put a stamp on it; otherwise it goes to the Dead-letter Office. There is what may be called a Dead-prayer Office, and thousands of well-worded petitions get buried up there. All of God's promises have their conditions; we must comply with these conditions, or we can not expect the blessings coupled with the promises. *Theodore L. Cuyler.*

No man ever yet asked to be, as the days pass by, more and more noble and sweet and pure and heavenly-minded; no man ever yet prayed that the evil spirits of hatred and pride and passion and worldliness might be cast out of his soul; without his petition being granted, and granted to the letter. *F. W. Farrar.*

Ask Not Amiss. If we ask for things that are not good for us, it is God's goodness not to grant them.

"I have lived to thank God that all my prayers have not been answered," said Jean Ingelow.

> We, ignorant of ourselves,
> Beg often our own harms which the wise powers
> Deny us for our good; so find we profit
> By losing of our prayers. *Shakespeare.*

Since it is my own judgment of what is good that guides me in any definite request, I necessarily make many mistakes in prayer, so that multitudes of things which my unwisdom seeks, the wiser love of my Father denies. "I beseech thee, show me thy glory," said Moses to God. "You are asking for death," was God's reply, "for no man can see my face and live." "Take away my life," said the petulant Elijah, depressed and weary, "for it is better for me to die than to live." But had that prayer been granted, what would have become of his glorious translation in the chariot of fire, which was surely a more triumphant close to such a noble life as his than an unseen death in the wilderness would have been! *G. H. Knight.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Too many petitions are mere repetitions.

There is a wide difference between saying and praying.

Prayer is a true wish sent Godward. *Phillips Brooks.*

To lift up a soul to God calms and ennobles it. *James Stalker.*

Prayer is inspiration on the hill-top for new toiling on the plain. *Maltbie Babcock.*

Self-centeredness in prayer is as hurtful as selfishness in anything else. *G. H. Knight.*

The life of prayer is the life of power. *Youth's Companion.*

Prayer must mean something to us, if it is to mean anything to God. *Maltbie Babcock.*

Prayer is not beggary, but communion. *Henry Ward Beecher.*

The Paternoster may be committed to memory quickly, but it is slowly learned by heart. *Maurice.*

God has made no promise to answer insincere prayer; and that prayer is insincere which is not followed up by hearty efforts to secure the thing sought. *Marcus Dods.*

Prayer is not the conquering of God's reluctance, but the taking hold of God's willingness. *Phillips Brooks.*

As we must spend time in cultivating our earthly friendships if we are to have their blessings, so we must spend time in cultivating the companionship of Christ. *Henry Drummond.*

If we would have God hear what we say to Him by prayer, we must be ready to hear what He says to us by His word. *Matthew Henry.*

We never learn the true sweetness and richness of life until we have learned to live for others, and we never reach the true blessing of prayer until we have learned to pray for others. *Marvin R. Vincent.*

Prayer, according to the definition given to us by Christ, is not so much the asking for some definite good which we suppose we need, as the attempt to lift our souls into the divine atmosphere. *Wm. J. Dawson.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations. Pet. 2.9.

The Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends. Job. 42.10.

Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss. Jas. 4.3.

And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us; and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him. 1 John 5.14-15.

If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. John 15.7.

Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. Phil. 4.6.

And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me, and I knew that thou hearest me always. John 11.41-42.

Now we know that God heareth not sinners; but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth. John 9.31.

Watch ye therefore, and pray always. Luke 21.36.

Give ear to my words, O Lord, consider my meditation. Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King, and my God: for unto thee will I pray. My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord. Psa. 5.1-3.

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A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Whatever may be said about my general Christian life, must I not confess with shame that this must be said, that it is far too little a life of prayer? The wonderful *privilege* of prayer I do not sufficiently recognize; the comforting *help* of prayer I do not sufficiently enjoy. If there had been any one spot on earth where God and man could meet, what thousands of sufferers and sorrowers would be always setting out on pilgrimage to reach it! But what is the actual fact? There is no such solitary spot, no such special hour; the whole world is His audience-chamber; His ear is never shut. *G. H. Knight.*

THE LESSON SUMMARY

The disciples had seen the strength and peace and joy that Jesus gained by communion with the Father, and they asked to be taught the secret of prayer. In response to their request, Jesus gave them that wonderfully comprehensive model prayer, that "covers every want of man, just as it befits every place and time," which is "at once supplication, exhortation, instruction, praise and worship."

Then to teach that the same earnest perseverance should be used in asking for spiritual blessings that is continuously exerted for temporal wants among men, Jesus sketched the pictures of a man importuning at midnight a selfish neighbor for bread with which to welcome a guest, and of a son asking food from his father. "Children," said the Saviour, "the selfish neighbor yielded to the continued entreaties, the earthly father never thought of giving his son a stone when he was asked for bread. Will not your heavenly Father hear you when you entreat Him? Will He not give you bread even though you ask for a stone? 'It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.' 'Pray without ceasing.'"

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The place of prayer in the life of Jesus.

2. What is the best definition of prayer? "Prayer is penitence, confession, aspiration, resignation; the converse of our hearts with the Father; the discipline of our wills to His will; the sincere and strenuous approach of our minds to the mysteries of His." *George Adam Smith.*

3. Fatherhood is Godlikeness. Every father ought to be like God to his children, as God likens Himself to a father, in love and tenderness. *Sunday School Times.*

4. When we pray this prayer, "Thy kingdom come," we are praying that God may rule our business life, our commercial life, and our political life. We are asking Him to take the government of our markets and our offices and our exchanges. We are asking Him to be Lord in the

realms of right and light. What an enormous sweep this prayer has! *J. D. Jones.*

5. If, as we believe, Jesus was no less than God, how could God pray to God, or what need could there be in His nature for the satisfaction of which He required to pray?

It may be a partial answer to this question to say that all prayer does not consist of petitions arising from the sense of need. . . . Prayer at its best is, if one may be allowed the expression, conversation with God, the confidential talks of a child who tells everything to his father. There is a remarkable example of this in the Confessions of St. Augustine. This great book is in the form of a prayer from beginning to end; yet it narrates its author's history and expounds the most important of his opinions. Evidently the good man had got into the habit of doing all his deepest thinking in the form of conversation with God.

Many of Christ's prayers were undoubtedly expressions of the sense of want. There is but one explanation of this; it is His true humanity. Christ was not half a God and half a man, but perfectly God and perfectly man. He prayed, then, because He was a man. *James Stalker.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. In what other lessons has Jesus answered unspoken thoughts? (Feb. 25, April 22.) 2. Review the lesson on Sabbath observance. (April 8.) 3. Write what you have already learned about the Jewish habits of dining. 4. Is there anything in modern society that corresponds to the Jews' choice of the first seats at a feast? 5. Recall the humility of John the Baptist. 6. In what other lessons has humility been taught? 7. What example of humility did Jesus give His disciples shortly before His crucifixion? (John 13.4-17.) 8. In Romans 12.1-13 read about humility, preferring one another, and other duties. 9. What happened once before when Jesus was the guest of a Pharisee? (April 22.) Luke records another feast at a Pharisee's home. (Luke 11.37-44.)

BETWEEN LESSON IV AND LESSON V

On another Sabbath day, Jesus restored a woman "who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years," and aroused still more the anger of the Jews. In two parables He compared the growth of the kingdom to mustard seed and to leaven. Going "through the cities and villages teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem," Jesus exhorted the people to "strive to enter in at the strait gate." When He was warned that Herod would kill Him, He said "Go ye and tell that fox, Behold I cast out devils, and I do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third I shall be perfected." (Luke 13.10-35.)

JESUS DINES WITH A PHARISEE

Luke 14.1-14. (Read Luke 11.37-54.) Commit vv. 13, 14.

Golden Text

He that humbleth himself shall be exalted. Luke 14.11.

Time: January, A. D. 30.
Place: Perea. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 67-69.

LESSON TEXT. LUKE 14.1-14

1 And it came to pass, as he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the sabbath day, that they watched him.
2 And, behold, there was a certain man before him which had the dropsy.
3 And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day?
4 And they held their peace. And he took *him,* and healed him, and let him go;
5 And answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day?
6 And they could not answer him again to these things.
7 And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them,
8 When thou art bidden of any *man* to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honorable man than thou be bidden of him.
9 And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room.
10 But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee.
11 For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.
12 Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor *thy* rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee.
13 But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind:
14 And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *They watched him.* Hoping He would say or do something that they could use against Him.

3. *Answering,* the thoughts of the Pharisees. *Is it lawful.* This question was a puzzler. By their traditions they could not say yes; by common humanity they could not say no. *Baugher.*

5. The emphatic word is *you.* How do *you* act, when *your* interests are concerned? Palestine abounds in unprotected cisterns, wells, and pits. The argument is that what the Pharisees allowed themselves for their own benefit must be allowed to Christ for the benefit of others. *Plummer.*

7. *Rooms,* R. V., *seats.*

9. *The lowest place.* Because the places between would all be taken.

12. *Call not thy friends.* This verse should be taken in connection with the words, "And thou shalt be blessed" of the fourteenth verse. "This is not a positive prohibition of entertaining one's friends and neighbors. Such intercourse is taken for granted. What is forbidden is the thought that *this is hospitality,* or in itself praiseworthy." *Riddle.*

13. This is to be taken as including all modes of providing for the wants of the classes referred to. *Riddle.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

3. *Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day.* Their fine-spun distinctions of deeds lawful and unlawful were spider's webs, and His act of mercy flew high above the webs, like some fair, winged creature glancing in the sunshine, while the spider sits in his crevice balked. *Alexander Maclaren.*

12. *Call not thy friends.* The trouble with our eyes so often is that the warmth that is in them—and there may be a good deal of warmth in them—we keep for the little knot of congenials that likewise look back warmly upon us. That is nature, but there is precious little gospel in it. "If ye love them that love you what thank have ye? Do not even the publicans the same? . . ."

It does not seem quite right when two or three or a dozen people are living lives that are warm and bright that they should spend a good part of their time beaming on each other. Christ did undoubtedly do a little of that in that beautiful Bethany home of Martha, Mary, and Lazarus; He beamed on them and they beamed on Him, and on very rare occasions, as it would seem, did what some of us do all the time, had a beautiful and comfortable time enjoying people that were thoroughly congenial to Him. But that was not the way He lived. We, some of us, live so. We, some of us, never beam except on people that beam on us. We have beaming dinner-parties, beaming sociables, beaming receptions and the like.

Christ's conception of Christianity was of something whereby the strong helped the weak, not helped those who were strong and so needed no help; something whereby those that were warm gathered around their fireplaces those that were cold, not those that had been comfortably heated by sitting at a comfortable fireplace of their own; something whereby those that were bright and cheery embraced with their hospitality those that were already so luminous and glad as to make more of the same an extravagance and a superfluity. *Charles H. Parkhurst.*

12. *Lest a recompense be made thee.* The privilege of doing good, of conferring blessings without the hope of a return, this He set before them, this He sets before us, as the grand privilege of all. We avail ourselves of it very seldom. The motive of giving in the expectation of receiving as much again, though a very sordid one, is apt to displace even in those who not only affect generosity but *are* generous, the one which surely commends itself to our consciences and reasons as the nobler. *Frederick Denison Maurice.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

11. *A feast on the sabbath day.* Feasts on the Sabbath were common among the Jews. The letter of the fourth commandment was observed, for the food was always cold, having been prepared the day before.

5. *Fallen into a pit.* The pit may have been a dried-up well of ordinary kind, the larger well used for watering gardens, or a mortar pit covered with boards or branches. *Van Lennep.*

7. *They chose out the chief rooms.* In Eastern entertainments, nothing of consequence ever takes place before the dinner has been despatched; music and dancing, exhibitions and amusements of all kinds, come after the cravings of appetite have been satisfied, and all are in a mood to be pleased by anything they may see or hear. As the guests assemble, they take their places on the divan, lining three sides of the apartment, and not a few of them plainly seek the uppermost seats at the feast, which are at the corners of the divan, for they will there be served first, and with the choicest morsels. But Orientals are very particular about rank, and most men dare not venture beyond certain limits. *Van Lennep.*

In the mixture of Jewish, Roman, Greek and Persian customs which prevailed in Palestine at this time, we can not be sure which were the most honorable places at table. The Talmud says that, on a couch holding three, the middle place is for the worthiest, the left for the second, and the right for the third. *Plummer.*

13. *When thou makest a feast, call the poor.* The natural principle of human hospitality is social intercourse between equals. Yet there were many exquisite axioms in Jewish ethics which forbade this spirit of exclusiveness. The men to whom Jesus spoke might have remembered their own legend that Job lived in a house that was built square with a door

at each side, always open, that the traveler coming from whatever quarter might find welcome. One of the counsels of Jewish wisdom was, "Let the house be open toward the street, and let the poor be the sons of thy house." *William J. Dawson.*

It is common in the East for a rich man to give a feast to the poor. Does he wish to gain some temporal or spiritual blessing? He orders a head-servant to prepare a feast for one or two hundred guests. Messengers are then despatched into the streets and lanes to inform the indigent, that on such a day rice and curry will be given to all who are there at the appointed time. Long before the hour the visitors may be seen bending their steps toward the house of the *Rasa* (king). When the food is ready, the guests sit in rows on the grass, and the servants hand out the portions. *Roberts, Oriental Illustrations.*

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Did you ever see a flounder? You know that it is flat and thin, black on one side and white on the other. Some one has told a story about a colored man who had never seen a flounder until he caught one when fishing. He looked at it in amazement, and then hurriedly rebaited his hook and dropped it carefully down into the spot from which he had drawn his fish. A bystander who had been watching him, asked him what he was doing. "Why," he answered, "I'se done caught half of a fish, and I'm gwine to catch the other half; it's right down *there!*"

The first part of our lesson to-day seems almost like the other half of a lesson we had a few months ago. That lesson was about Jesus and the Sabbath. What did that lesson say about the question of the Pharisees as to whether it were lawful to heal on the Sabbath? About Jesus and a man with a withered hand? About a sheep falling into a pit on the Sabbath?

For Older Pupils. There are some truths—such as the sin of hypocrisy, the virtue of humility, the need of prayer—which Jesus taught in more than one way. You remember that a month ago to-day (July 1) we had a lesson upon humility. To-day we have a parable illustrating the same thought, that "he that humbleth himself shall be exalted," and three weeks from to-day we take up another parable illustrating this thought again.

The first part of our lesson is about healing on the Sabbath. Luke mentions three cures made by Jesus on the Sabbath. Tell the story of the restoring of the withered hand. (The lesson for April 8). On another occasion, told in Luke 13.11-17, Jesus made straight a woman who "had a spirit of infirmity" eighteen years, "and was bowed together." The ruler of the synagogue said angrily to the people, "There are six days in which man ought to work; in them therefore come and be healed

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and not on the Sabbath day." But Jesus said to him, "Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering? and ought not this woman be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?" "And when he had said these things," Luke adds, "all his adversaries were ashamed."

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. Seizing Opportunities

The Example of Jesus. Hospitality affords unrivaled opportunities of conversation, and Jesus made use of them to speak words of eternal life. If you carefully examine His words, you will be surprised to find how many of them are literally table-talk, words spoken to His fellow-guests at meals. Some of His most priceless sayings, which are now the watchwords of His religion, were uttered in these commonplace circumstances. . . . This is an instance of how Jesus dignified life and found golden opportunities of doing good in those elements of it which are often treated as mere waste. Men of social charm often use their gift to their undoing and to the injury of others. The meeting place of boon companions is to many the vestibule of ruin. Even where sociability is not permitted to degenerate into temptation, the conversation of the table is too often allowed to lapse into triviality and stupidity; and the meetings of friends, which might give intellectual stimulus and kindle noble purpose, become a weariness and satisfy nobody. It is a rare gift to lift conversation out of the ditch and lead it to manly and profitable themes. *James Stalker, Imago Christi.*

Opportunities Lie Near at Hand. There is a legend of an artist, who long sought for a piece of sandalwood out of which to carve a Madonna. At last he was about to give up in despair, leaving the vision of his life unrealized, when in a dream he was bidden to shape the figure from a block of oak-wood, which was destined for the fire. Obeying the command, he produced from the log of common firewood a masterpiece.

In like manner many people wait for great and brilliant opportunities for doing the good things, the beautiful things, of which they dream, while through all the plain, common days, the very opportunities they require for such deeds lie close to them, in the simplest and most familiar circumstances. They wait to find sandalwood out of which to carve Madonnas, while far more lovely Madonnas than they dream of are hidden in the common logs of oak they burn in their open fireplaces, or spurn with their feet in the woodyard. *J. R. Miller.*

The man who looks at glass
On it may stay his eye,

Or through it let his vision pass
And all the heavens espy. *Thoreau.*

Now is the Time. Upon the sun-dial that was erected at All Soul's College, Oxford, England, these Latin words in large gold letters are inscribed above the long pointer, *"Pereunt et imputantur,"* "They (the hours) perish and are set down to our account," or "They are wasted and are added to our debt."

Nowhere is the sky so blue, the grass so green, the sunshine so bright, the shade so welcome, as right here, now, to-day. No other blue sky, nor bright sunshine, nor welcome shade exists for you. Other skies are bright for other men. They have been bright in the past and so will they be again, but yours are here and now. To-day is your day and mine, the only day we have, the day in which we play our part. What our part may signify in the great whole we may not understand, but we are here to do it, and now is the time. This we know, it is a part of action, not of whining. *David Starr Jordan.*

Lost Opportunities. The Roman myth about the priceless "Sibylline Verses" points the moral that the great opportunities of life, like the Sibylline books, diminish in number and increase in value every time they are neglected. A Sibyl, so the legend runs, once came to the palace of Tarquin the Second to offer him nine valuable volumes. The price was so exorbitant that Tarquin refused to purchase them. Departing, the Sibyl burned three of the books, and then returned and offered the remaining six at the same price. The offer being again refused, she burned three more of the volumes, and once more returned with the three remaining. Upon finding that she refused to part with the last three on better terms than she had made for the entire nine, Tarquin was perplexed by her conduct, and consulted his augurs, who advised him to buy the books. When Tarquin found that they were the precious "Sibylline Verses" great was his lament over the destruction of the other volumes.

II. The Lowest Place

What is Humility? It literally means a low estimate of self. But, then, all estimates are relative. The value of anything depends upon the standard used. Everything hinges on the unit. You are sailing down the river, and you think your yacht passing swift until you meet a swifter. So long as a dwarf lives among dwarfs he thinks himself a giant. Saul was humbled when he saw Goliath. The Catskills are huge until you see the Alps—the Alps until you see the Himalayas. . . . Now, a man's standard according to the Bible is his standing in God's sight.

The apostle writes, "We all have come short of the glory of God." God in the world must be the standard of the world. When you wish to

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learn the true character of your life, measure it by the laws of God. They that know their God will be humble. They that know themselves can not be proud. Look up and grasp His greatness; then look down and contemplate thine own littleness. Thus is pride slain. *Malcolm J. MacLeod.*

The Lesson Taught by Dante. When, in the great white Rose of Paradise, Dante asks, "Whether the spirits in the outermost spheres do not long for a higher and nearer place?" all the spirits glow into a happy smile, and Piccarda tells him that the will of them all is so absolutely the will of God that they do not dream of desiring anything but what God wills. Their lower place pleases them, because it pleases Him. *F. W. Farrar.*

A Gracious Lesson. An American was traveling in Norway, and was very angry, because, although he had paid for a first-class berth, he was put into a crowded second-class compartment and an upper berth was given to him. The conductor was sorry, but could do nothing for him. One of the other passengers then offered to exchange his lower berth with him, and the offer was quickly accepted. The next morning, after a pleasant conversation, the obliging passenger said, as he was about to leave the train, "Good-by. I hope that sometime you will think of Prince Bernadotte." When the others told the American that it was in truth Prince Bernadotte, the second son of the king of Sweden, the American felt as he expressed it, "very small."

Go Where God Wants You. If you could imagine the letters of the alphabet endowed with free will, and then imagine an author trying to express himself therewith, you might conceive one letter saying, "I want to be on the title-page"; another, "I want to be an ornamental letter at the beginning of the chapter"; another, "I would like to be in the preface." Some letters are more important than others; some fill a more important place; but it is the function of each letter to be just where the author wishes it to be. In the book of life which God is writing, you are one letter. Go where He puts you, and so bear your part in the message of life which He is spelling out. *Lyman Abbott.*

Harmful Humility. Humility is good when it stimulates; it is bad when it paralyzes the active powers of a man. It may do either. We have noble examples of humility as a stimulus; the sense of weakness making a man all the more ardent to use all the strength he has. But if conscious weakness causes a man to believe that it makes no difference whether he works or not, then his humility is his curse. . . .

Remember, too, that such humility, the humility that enfeebles and disarms you, comes, if you get at its root, from an over-thought about yourself, an over-sense of your own personality, and so is close akin to pride. It has run all around the circle in its desire to escape from pride, and has almost got back to pride again. . . . Not by studying himself, but by forgetting himself in the desire to serve his Lord, does a man exchange the false humility which crushes for the true humility

which inspires. What has become of the self-distrust and shyness of that gentle scholar who has turned into a Boanerges of the truth; and of that shrinking woman who goes unmoved through the hooting of a rabble to the stake? Both have lost themselves in their Lord. *Phillips Brooks.*

III. True Hospitality

Its Nature. Where a real advantage can be conferred by your hospitality; where the comfort of a stranger can be secured; where innocent and exhilarating pleasure can be bestowed; where you can be the means of forming friendships useful and satisfactory to yourself and others—in such cases be given to hospitality, but on every account emancipate yourself from the dreary, wasteful, resultless round of entertainments which are likely to be as distasteful and heartless to those who receive them as those of which they are the recompense were to yourself. *Marcus Dods.*

Social Helpfulness. Jesus was not talking about charity, about alms, but about social attentions to the socially neglected when He thus spoke. You can feed the hungry body by sending a basket to the poverty-stricken home, but you can not feed the hungry soul at any table except your own. About even our slum work and our city mission work there is often too much of the *de haut en bas* air. It is a pretty thing that the daughter of a multimillionaire should visit the day nursery and trot the babies of the poor upon her knee, but it means more when she invites the tired sewing girl or the governess to be her guest for a few days at some pleasure resort. It is in society that the real character comes out. The true child of God is seeking for the "wall flowers" that they may be prettily displayed. The true disciple of the Son of God knows that the country boy newly come to the city needs a little social attention to keep his feet from straying. The pleasant "good morning" to the kitchen maid does her more good than her breakfast. "Generous but exclusive" describes a spirit but half converted; friendly toward the friendless, attentive toward the neglected, and hospitable toward those whom "society" snubs, are real characteristics of a true follower of the Lord Jesus. It is not to be doubted that a grasp of the poor man's hand will do more to break down the animosities of his class than the exchange of coins between the two palms. The attrition between rich and poor can never be overcome by largesses, however munificent. The rich man who founds a hospital but snubs his stenographer, who builds an art gallery but curses his coachman, has not bridged, but deepened, the antipathy between class and class.

All of this Jesus saw and taught, in His own parabolic way. On this fundamental fact the college settlements stand, but the stability or instability of their work depends on the power with which they bring the poor to see this kindness to be the kindness of Christ. Whether in the

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settlement or in the kitchen, the work can be done, must be done, will be done. But the individual soon vanishes and the classes stand wide apart as ever. What is needed is Christ in each, drawing both together. It is not by the giving of gold, nor by the planting of Gatling guns, that peace may be permanently secured, but by the love of Christ shed abroad in both rich and poor, and making of two "classes" one family. *The Interior.*

Mr. Carnegie's View of True Society. Last year Mr. Carnegie said that he had derived great satisfaction from his fund of two and a half million dollars given to his native town of Dunfermline, the revenue of which is to be used, "to bring into the lives of the toiling masses of the town more of sweetness and of light; to give them,—especially the young,—some charm, some happiness, some elevating conditions of life which residence elsewhere would have denied." "This question is always before us," continued Mr. Carnegie: "Is the man devoting more and more of his time and means for the benefit of his fellows, and thinking less and less of himself; is the idea of brotherhood increasing,—the knowledge that we are all members of one great family, only playing with somewhat different toys?

"What a man was by birth used to be the ruling consideration and is so in some countries yet, though constantly growing less important; wherever our tongue is spoken it is rapidly vanishing. It was displaced for another test—what a man owned, and the millionaire was ennobled, for the rule of those that stood upon birth, the first test, has always been that enormous wealth should be drawn into their ranks.

"This alliance of birth and wealth is being displaced in our day by what a man knows, a fit successor in the march of progress, and an infinitely higher and juster standard than either birth or wealth.

"It is not, however, what a man knows that is to be the final step; in the future the question is neither to be how a man was born, how great his wealth, nor even what he knows, but how he serves his fellow men.

"Here is the true, the final aristocracy which never can be displaced —not what he does for himself, but what he does for others will be the standard by which he is judged. Toward this ideal I think that we are marching more directly in America than in any other land."

SENTENCE SERMONS

Lowliness is the beginning of holiness. *B. C. Caffin.*

Humility is the passport to promotion in the kingdom of God. *Plummer.*

It is easy to look down on others; to look down on ourselves is the difficulty. *Lord Peterborough.*

I call the soul, the best qualities, the real merit of a man, the numerator, and the opinion he has of himself the denominator; the larger the

denominator, we know, the smaller the importance of the numerator. *Count Tolstoi.*

There was never such a leveler among men as Jesus Christ; but He leveled up and not down; He took the lowest and the poorest and the meanest and exalted them into royalty. *F. A. Noble.*

Humility is to make a right estimate of one's self; it is no humility for a man to think less of himself than he ought, though it might rather puzzle him to do that. *Spurgeon.*

Manners are not idle, but the fruit
Of noble nature and of loyal mind. *Tennyson.*

A good remedy for strife after place is to be so rich in God that you can afford to do without everything else. *Benjamin Adams.*

This deep humility we find
The mark of every master mind. *Thomas.*

What is public history but a register of the successes, the disappointments, the vices, the follies, and the quarrels of those who engage in the contention for power? *Paley.*

Discourtesy does not spring from one bad quality of the mind, but from several; from foolish vanity, from ignorance of what is due to others, from indolence, from stupidity, from distraction of thought, from contempt of others, from jealousy. *La Bruyère.*

Before men we stand as opaque beehives; they can see the thoughts that go in and out of us, but what work they do inside of the man we can not tell: before God we are like glass beehives; all that our thoughts are doing within us He perfectly sees and understands. *Beecher.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Phil. 2.3.

God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Jas. 4.6.

When men are cast down, then thou shalt say, There is lifting up; and He shall save the humble person. Job 22.29.

Put not forth thyself in the presence of the king, and stand not in the place of great men: For better it is that it be said unto thee, Come up hither; than that thou shouldst be put lower in the presence of the prince whom thine eyes have seen. Prov. 25.6, 7.

They (the Pharisees) love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues. Matt. 23.6.

Use hospitality one to another without grudging. 1 Pet. 4.9.

A man's pride shall bring him low; but honor shall uphold the humble in spirit. Prov. 29.23.

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Be not forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. Heb. 13.2.

Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared. Neh. 8.10.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Content to come, content to go,
Content to wrestle or to race,
Content to know or not to know,
Each in his place.

Lord, grant us grace to love Thee so
That glad of heart and glad of face
At last we may sit high or low,
Each in his place,

Where pleasures flow as rivers flow,
And loss has left no barren trace,
And all that are, are perfect so,
Each in his place. *Christina Rossetti.*

THE LESSON SUMMARY

"Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day?" This question arises once more as Jesus is at a Pharisee's feast. He heals the man sick with the dropsy, for "no Sabbath law, no so-called religious restriction, can ever forbid helping the miserable."

Then at the feast Jesus gives a series of table-talks. "He could go into society, not only without striking His colors, but for the purpose of displaying them." He has watched the unseemly strife for the best seats at the feast, and He rebukes the selfishness by two pictures: one of a man who had chosen the best seat at a wedding, but was compelled to give it up to a more honorable guest and to take the lowest place of all, and another of a man who, having with humility taken the lowest place, is invited by the host to come up to the highest seat. The moral is given in verse eleven. "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

Turning to the host, Jesus advised him not to invite his friends or rich neighbors in order to receive from them in return, but to do good to those who can not reward him. So doing, thou shalt be blessed.

"Companion means a bread-fellow (*con,* together, and *panis,* bread)," says James Wells. "You and all God's children are bread-fellows. God has made you so, for you are all canopied over by the same tent and share the same hourly hospitality: you eat of God's bread and drink God's cup."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The relation between Jesus and the Pharisees.

2. Social Settlements.

3. Jesus pointed the finger of condemnation at those who extend hospitality only to guests who, they hope, will extend it to them in return, thus degrading it to a business transaction. It is, if possible, a meaner motive still to make it only an opportunity of selfish display. This is one of the growing evils of the present day. *James Stalker.*

4. How far ought the people of God to venture into society and take part in its enjoyments? What is its effect on your religious life and profession? Does it silence your testimony? Does it cool your enthusiasm? Does it secularize you and render you unfit for prayer? If so, then you must adopt the Baptist's line of conduct and keep away from it, or seek the company in which your principles will be safe. But there are those who can venture far into the world and yet everywhere be true to their Saviour; they are known as Christians wherever they appear, and people respect their position; they would not go anywhere if they knew their mouths were to be stopped on the subjects lying nearest their hearts; the energy of Christ in them is so glowing and victorious a force that they mold the society in which they are, instead of being molded by it. This may be a difficult attainment; but there can be no doubt that it is the attitude toward the world most worthy of Christ's followers and like to His own. *James Stalker.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Compare the parable of the Great Supper, Luke 14.16-24, with that of the Marriage of the King's Son in Matt. 22.2-14. 2. To what have the parables already studied likened the kingdom of God? 3. Make a list of all the references to the kingdom of God, or kingdom of Heaven, in previous lessons, and from them write a definition of the term. 4. What does the Bible say is the condition of entrance into the kingdom? (John 3.5; Matt. 25.34-40.) See also Subject-Index of the Bible, under *Kingdom of God, who shall enter.* 5. Esther 5.8 gives Haman's first invitation to a banquet; Esther 6.14 gives the second summons through the king's chamberlains. What oriental custom does this illustrate which is also illustrated in our next lesson? 6. What excuse did Aaron give for fashioning the golden calf? (Exod. 32.21-24.)

BETWEEN LESSON V AND LESSON VI

Lesson VI immediately follows Lesson V.

FALSE EXCUSES

Luke 14.15-24. (Read Matt. 22.1-14.) Commit vv. 23, 24.

Golden Text

And they all with one consent began to make excuse. Luke 14.18.

Time: January, A. D. 30.
Place: Perea. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 70-73.

LESSON TEXT. LUKE 14.15-24

15 And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed *is* he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.

16 Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many:

17 And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready.

18 And they all with one *consent* began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused.

19 And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused.

20 And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.

21 So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.

22 And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.

23 And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel *them* to come in, that my house may be filled.

24 For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

15. *These things.* The words of Jesus in last Sunday's lesson. "It is a probable supposition that the man, hearing of the resurrection of the just (v. 14), at once thought of the great feast (the millennial feast) which the Jews expected would follow, and thus spoke with the common Jewish idea that his admission to that feast was a certainty." *Riddle.*

16. *Then said he unto him.* "Yes," said the Master, "blessed indeed are they who sit down at the heavenly feast. You think you are one of those whom the King of Heaven has invited to the banquet; what have you done, though, with the invitation? I know many who have received it who have simply tossed it aside; are you of that number? Listen now to my story of the divine banquet and of the invited thereto." *Spence. A certain man.* This man represents God. *Bade.* Through the ancient prophets. *Many.* The Jewish nation.

17. *His servant.* Christ. (See Matt. 4.17.)

18. *With one consent.* With one accord. The spirit of all was the same, though their excuses differed. They had all made their engagements for business or pleasure with no regard to the date of the banquet.

19. *Therefore I cannot come.* According to Mosaic law (Deut. 24.5), a newly married man was exempt from military duty for a year. "These excuses represent examples of usual every-day causes of indifference to the kingdom of God. To all these excuses one thing is common—in each, temporal good is valued higher than spiritual. *Spence.*

20. *Streets and lanes.* In the city, the invitation is still to the Jews. *The poor.* The despised, the "publicans and sinners," the multitude who heard Him gladly.

23. *Into the highways and hedges.* Without the city; this invitation is to the Gentiles. *Compel them.* R. V., *constrain.* True missionary zeal so differs from all other impulses that it may be spoken of as a "constraining" of men to enter the kingdom of God. *Riddle.*

24. Verse 23 may well be regarded as the end of the parable, and verse 24 as spoken by Christ to the guests in the house of the Pharisee. *My supper.* It is given in my honor, though I come in the form of a servant to invite you; and none of you will enter, because in refusing me, you refuse to obey the second summons of God. *Riddle.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

15. *Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.* The sentimental reflection sounded as cant to his ear, as a statement, that is, which, while true in itself, was not true for the speaker; and it is characteristic of all earnest minds to have a hearty abhorrence of cant. The prophet Jeremiah could not bear to hear a godless generation talk glibly of the "Burden of the Lord," while the word of the Lord was in truth no burden to them as it was to his own heart; and in the name of God and of sincerity he interdicted further use of the phrase, saying, "the burden of the Lord shall ye mention no more." (Jer. 23.36.) It made his spirit bitter, and almost cynical, to listen to such religious phraseology as employed by men who had no comprehension of its meaning. Jesus uttered the parable as one who would say: "Think you so? Let me tell you how little many such as you really care for the privilege you seem to value so highly." *A. B. Bruce, Parabolic Teaching of Our Lord.*

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21. *Bring in hither the poor.* Very deep was Christ's tender regard for the poor, the destitute, the ignorant, the physically wretched, those of whom men spoke as "common people," and the "vulgar multitudes." These were all swept by Pharisaic contempt into one common dust heap, unworthy of notice—except the drawing back of the hem of the garment, so as not to touch them. They were disdainfully massed together under the common name of "the people of the land." . . . No parley must be held with such; no member of the rabbinic school must buy fruit from them or sell it to them, or receive one of them as a guest, or travel with them, or regard their wives and daughters as other than an abomination. Their salutations were only to be noticed by a reluctant nod of the head. *Farrar, The Life of Lives.*

23. *Compel them to come in.* The giver of the feast does not anticipate on their parts any reluctance to accept his invitation, nor any indifference towards it, which should need to be violently overcome. What rather he expects is, that these homeless dwellers in the highways and by the hedges will hold themselves so unworthy of the invitation as hardly to be persuaded that it was intended for them; will not be induced without a certain constraint to enter the rich man's dwelling, and share in his magnificent entertainment. *Trench, Parables.*

23. *That my house may be filled.* The inference can not be mistaken. God no longer calls the Pharisees His friends. The world shall come and eat of the feast which they rejected. The form of invitation henceforth shall be, "Him that cometh I will in no wise cast out." *William J. Dawson.*

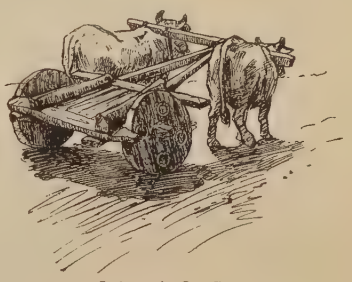
LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

15. *Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.* He that hath a permanent abode in Palestine, so taught the Talmud, was sure of the life to come. . . . "Three things," we read in another authority, "are Israel's through suffering: Palestine, traditional lore, and the world to come." Nor did this feeling abate with the desolation of their country. In the third and fourth centuries of our era they still taught, "He that dwelleth in Palestine is without sin." *Edersheim, Sketches of Jewish Social Life.*

16. *A certain man made a great supper.* A feast is really a public, and not a social and private, gathering. It is rarely given, excepting on some special occasion, such as a marriage or the birth of a son, or at the conclusion of the harvest or the vintage. It is quite distinct from the entertainment of strangers or friends when a kid or a lamb suffices for the feast. On the greater occasion, when a calf or a bullock is to be slain, the number of the guests is very large, since the whole of the food must be consumed on the day when the

animal is killed; the orientals never attempting to keep any flesh over night. Preparations are made some days in advance, and the coming feast is announced to the whole neighborhood. In the invitations no distinction of social rank is regarded; but very marked distinctions are made in the relative positions of the guests when they arrive, and the placing of them in their proper places is one of the most important duties of the host. The intended guests having been apprised some days before of the coming feast, servants are again sent, on the morning of the day, to remind those who have been invited; and the omission of this second summons would be a grievous breach of etiquette, equivalent to a canceling of the previous more general notification. To refuse the second summons would be an insult which is equivalent among the Arab tribes to a declaration of war. *Tristram, Eastern Customs.*

18. *Began to make excuse.* An Oriental never gives a direct refusal to any request, but he is very ingenious in phrasing his excuses. He would be delighted indeed to do what you ask of him, but something unforeseen has occurred which will render it impossible. Perhaps some other time, *inshallah,* may it please God, he will be more fortunate. His excuses are often so thin as to be quite transparent, but he is not at all abashed. *Albert L. Long, in Sunday School Times.*



Oriental Ox-Cart

18. *I have bought a field of ground.* The primitive custom still prevails in the East in regard to the transfer of landed property. The neighbors are called together, and boundaries are agreed upon and pointed out to those who shall legally witness the transaction in a documentary form. The business takes time, and would naturally interfere with social festivities. *Albert L. Long.*

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Do you know any one who is very good at making excuses? What are some excuses that you hear at school when a lesson has not been learned? Do you ever make any of these excuses yourself—I didn't think, I forgot, I couldn't help it, I didn't mean to, I didn't have time, I wasn't as bad as she, he did it first?

We are to study to-day a parable about False Excuses. What remark did one of the guests make at the feast in the Pharisee's house after Jesus had told His host to invite the poor and then he "should be recompensed at the resurrection?"

For Older Pupils. Did you ever talk with some one who only half

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listened, and, catching some word or phrase, made a remark which that word called to his mind, but which had no connection with your thought? You did not feel flattered by this evidence of his lack of interest in what you said. One time when Jesus had been talking to His disciples in the presence of a great multitude about trusting in God and bearing witness to Him, and had told them that the Holy Ghost would teach them what they ought to say when they were brought before magistrates and powers, one of the people interrupted Him. He had caught the word "magistrates" and this reminded him of the thought constantly in his mind, his grievance against his brother. "Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me," he exclaimed.

At the feast in the Pharisee's house, after Jesus had ended His parable about the Great Supper, by telling them that they who called the poor should be recompensed at the Resurrection, one of the guests present was reminded by the word "resurrection" of the "kingdom of God" and he uttered his trite observation, "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God."

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. The Kingdom of God

False Conceptions of the Meaning of the Term. Many have supposed that the kingdom of God was identical with Heaven, the home of the blessed dead. This mistake is doubtless due to the expression so common in the Gospel of Matthew, the "Kingdom of Heaven," which is synonymous with the "Kingdom of God."

By those holding this view the importance attached to the kingdom in the teachings of Christ is understood to emphasize the importance of gaining Heaven. The great object of endeavor is to "save the soul." This conception of Christianity finds its most perfect exposition in the wonderful allegory of Bunyan. Christian leaves his city to its destruction and devotes his life to gaining a destination of personal safety.

Another extremely common misconception of the kingdom identifies it with the visible church. Thus the church, instead of being a means to the kingdom as an end, becomes an end in itself. . . .

Another common error is to identify the kingdom with the *invisible* church, which in its effects is much the same as confounding it with Heaven. It serves to make the kingdom intangible, and, therefore, to many minds, unreal.

Each of the errors referred to, like all long-lived and influential errors, is a half-truth; and a half-truth is usually much more dangerous than a whole lie, because it is so much more plausible and more tenacious of life. . . .

It is a mischievous error so to identify the kingdom of God with

Heaven, or with the visible church, or with the invisible church, as to make it coextensive with any one of these, for it is more comprehensive than all of them. *Josiah Strong, The Next Great Awakening.*

The True Meaning of the Term. Deliverance from enemies, political supremacy of the Jews, a splendid city, and temporal prosperity—these were the features which received emphasis in the popular mind, but they are not mentioned by Christ. He puts in their place deliverance from sin, purity of heart, fellowship with God, and unselfish service (Matt. 5.3, 6, 8; 6.12; Mark 10.43-45). Further, the common view placed a judgment by the Messiah at the beginning of the kingdom; Christ put it at the kingdom's consummation (Matt. 3.12; 13.30). The common view emphasized the national character of the kingdom; Christ's teaching, though designed primarily for the Jews, was without national limitations. It was adapted to man as man. . . .

The term *kingdom of God,* as used by Christ, has not a constant meaning. There are at least four great ideas which are at times associated with it. Sometimes one of these is its prominent burden, sometimes another. First, the term means the dominion of God realized within and without, but with the emphasis on the inward realization (Matt. 3.2; 4.17; 6.10; 13.44, 45). Second, the term means the company of those who are under the dominion of God. Thus Jesus says that the kingdom of God consists of those who are childlike in heart (Mark 10.14; Matt. 13.24, 41). Third, it means the blessings and privileges that accompany the divine dominion, as when Jesus tells the Jews that the kingdom of Heaven shall be taken away from men, and be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits of it (Matt. 5.3, 10; 21:43). Finally, it means the place that is to be occupied in the future by those who are under the divine dominion (Matt. 7.21; 8.11; 13.43; 25.34; 26.29). *Gilbert's Student's Life of Jesus.*

An analysis of one hundred and nineteen passages in the New Testament where the expression "kingdom" occurs, shows that it means the *rule of God;* which was manifested in and through Christ; is apparent in the church; gradually develops amidst hindrances; is triumphant at the second coming of Christ ("the end"); and, finally, perfected in the world to come. *Edersheim.*

The idea of the kingdom of God, as an actual reign of God over living men, in which all ancient anticipations of good are accomplished and a new state of virtue and blessedness is established on earth, was foremost and dominant in the teaching of Jesus. It was the keynote of His ministry. Everything that He said, everything that He did, was in harmony with this master thought. *Henry van Dyke.*

How to Belong to the Kingdom of Heaven. Citizenship in the kingdom of Heaven is not merely a feature of the future life or an ideal for this life. It is as real and present a fact as citizenship in the United States or Great Britain. Doubtless we shall become much better

acquainted with its duties and much more appreciative of its privileges in the life to come than we are here. But if we belong to God we are as truly citizens of the divine kingdom here and now as we shall be there.

What is the key, the mainspring, of citizenship in Heaven, then? It is active love for Christ and His children. He who does God's will in humility, fidelity, and love—he is the one who belongs to the kingdom of God. *The Congregationalist.*

II. Excuses

Selfishness the Root of Excuse Making. Everywhere one hears the excuse that he "must needs" attend to business. God's will and work must be postponed till man's will and pleasure receive attention. "Then you think," says George Macdonald, "that the Judge will be satisfied if you say, 'Lord, I had so many names in my visiting book, and so many invitations I could not refuse, that it was impossible for me to attend to those things?'"

"The spirit of the kingdom is to lay stress on the claims of others upon us, while excuse making does exactly the opposite. It puts forward the comfort, the convenience, or the whims, of the individual, as a reason for counting him exempt from some duty he does not like.

"It gives to such reasons for neglect of duty a force we never would give them for the neglect of pleasure. It keeps one from church because of slight indispositions and disturbances of the weather which would not detain him from business. On a plea of needful economy it shuts purses against claims of benevolence or religion which open quickly enough to outlay on social follies. In fact, it is a mental habit, which amounts to seeing with one set of eyes the pleasures which draw us, and with quite another the duties which distract or weary us." *Sunday School Times.*

The Soldier Who Was First of All a Watch Tinker. We have heard of a young man who enlisted in the army in the early part of the war. He was a watchmaker by trade, and of a thrifty turn of mind. He packed a kit of tools in his knapsack, proposing at odd times to turn an honest penny by mending watches. His tent soon presented the appearance of a busy watchmaker's shop. Things went on in this way for some time, the officers excusing him first from daily guard duty, on the ground that he was useful in the special line of private service which was engaging him. One day a double detail was ordered and he was drawn for duty. When the sergeant called at his tent and ordered him to duty, he looked up with surprise, and some show of indignation, and said: "It is impossible for me to go on duty to-day. I have so many watches to repair." Is it not so with many of the soldiers of the cross? They become so absorbed in their own affairs that they are ready to say at the Master's call: "I pray thee have me excused." They are nomi-

nally soldiers of Christ, but are in reality only watch tinkers. *Gerard B. Hallock.*

Wide Margins.

Print not my Book of Days, I pray,
On meager page, in type compact,
Lest the Great Reader's calm eye stray
Skippingly through from fact to fact;

But let there be a liberal space,
At least 'twixt lines where ill is writ,
That I with tempering hand may trace
A word to dull the edge of it.

And save for me a margin wide
Where I may scribble at my ease
Elucidative note and guide
Of most adroit apologies! *Meredith Nicholson.*

III. Accept the Invitation

Listen to the Call. In one of Andersen's most significant parables he tells us of a child who, after leaving church, its mind full of petty vanity and trivial fancies, hears the sound of a solemn, deep-toned bell far in the forest, and follows it.

He stumbles along, now through jungles full of wild beasts, now through the sunny calm of the open glade. At times he hears nothing but the wind, the buzz of insects, the howl of some animal, the chirp of birds,—and then the summons of the bell resounds above, so clear and strong that it seems to fill the earth and heavens.

We all, at times, hear this summons; louder and clearer in our youth than at any other time. It calls us to a life of purity and self-sacrifice, to noble aims. It tells us that man is our brother and God our father, that pain and death are short, and life and love everlasting. *Youth's Companion.*

Not Heeded. What if the world were bare of plants and blossoms, except upon one acre of its surface, where trees and shrubs and flowers grew in profusion, would not pilgrimages be made from the ends of the earth to gaze with wonder and delight upon its beauty? Yet every field gives exhibitions of the same creative, beneficent power, and who regards them?

What if once a year a book were opened, the one book in the world that could show us authoritatively how to make the best of life, and that drew wide the veil beyond death? Would not men everywhere crowd to hear the oracle? Such a book may be found unheeded and unopened in many a house.

What if we could pray to God but once in our lives? Think of the

petitions, the half-desperate hope, the fear, the agony, crowded into that one petition! We can speak to Him at any moment, and often forget to do it at all.

There are chances, possibilities and forces which come into all our lives, more powerful than any archangel, but they are matters of course to us, and we give them little or no heed. *Youth's Companion.*

Give your Youth to God. A Christian woman was employed as a nurse in a house where a loved mother lay ill. Her daughter, a girl of fifteen, had never given her heart to Christ, fearing that by so doing she might lose some of her youthful pleasures, and saying that when she grew older, then she would give herself to Him.

One day she came into the house, bringing a bouquet of beautiful fresh carnations for her mother. The nurse commented upon their loveliness and then said, "We will not take them up to your mother now —they are too fresh and beautiful; we will wait a few days until they have begun to fade and wither." The young girl was surprised, almost indignant, and sought an explanation for such a seemingly unnatural course. Said the nurse: "Is not this what you are doing to your heavenly Father? Are you not by your conduct reserving for yourself the beauty and freshness of your young life, and waiting to offer Him the faded blossoms from which all the beauty and freshness has departed?" *Grace A. Stevinson, in The Christian Endeavor World.*

Begin To-day. Is there nothing which Christ, as your Friend, your Lord, your Saviour, wants you to do that you are leaving undone to-day? Do you doubt one instant, with His high and deep love for your soul, that He wants you to pray? And do you pray? Do you doubt for one instant it is His will that you should honor and help and bless all men about you who are His brethren? Are you doing anything like that? Do you doubt one instant that His will is that you should make life serious and lofty? Do you one instant doubt that He wants you to be pure in deed and word and thought? And are you pure? Do you doubt one instant that His command is for you openly to own Him and declare that you are His servants before all the world? And have you done it? These are the questions which make the whole matter clear. No, not in quiet lanes, nor in the bright temple courts, as once He spake, and not from blazing heavens as men sometimes seem to expect—not so does Christ speak to us. And yet He speaks here in my heart. *Phillips Brooks.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

The elect are whosoever will; the non-elect are whosoever won't. *Beecher.*

"I will not do it," would often be much nearer the truth than "I can not do it." *Alexander Maclaren.*

A bad business is a poor excuse for not following Christ; follow Him out of it. *Lyman Abbott.*

Blessed is the man who has not acquired the excuse habit. *Sunday School Times.*

Ought is the strongest word in human speech; *excuse*, the weakest. *H. W. Warren.*

Our sin is this, that we all with one consent excuse ourselves from our responsibilities. *H. S. Holland.*

We can not crown Christ Lord at all unless we crown Him Lord of all. *Hudson Taylor.*

There is but one obligation, and that is the obligation to obey the highest dictate. *Thoreau.*

It is not our profession that we ought to be spiritual, nor our acknowledgment that we ought to love God that avails; but what avails is our being spiritual and our actually loving God above all. *Marcus Dods.*

To be always intending to live a new life, but never finding time to set about it—this is as if a man should put off eating and drinking and sleeping from one day to another, until he is starved and destroyed. *Tillotson.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God. Luke 9.62.

The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. Matt. 21.43.

He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name. John 1.11, 12.

Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life. John 5.40.

And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. Rev. 22.17.

He that feareth him and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. Acts 10.35.

Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation. 2 Cor. 6.2.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

There is a general invitation which comes to all who hear the Gospel. The dawn of every Sabbath brings it; it is repeated in every sermon; it comes to us in the reading of the Bible in public and in private; it is repeated in the lives of Christians, and in the religious institutions by which we are surrounded. And to this invitation all consent, just as all

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who received the invitation to the great supper accepted it. It is easy to agree that it is a good thing to be a Christian, and all intend some time or other to become Christians. But then comes the second and particular invitation to become a Christian, and to become one now. Will you now be a Christian? Will you take the decisive step? Will you confess your faith, and let the world know whose you are and whom you serve? This invitation comes in many forms. It may come in an unusually earnest appeal from the pulpit; it may come in a revival of religion going on in our neighborhood; it may come from serious illness; but in whatever form it comes it is always the same in its nature—it is a challenge to turn conviction into action; no longer to admire Christ and to approve of Christianity from a distance, but to join the ranks of the soldiers of Christ. *James Stalker.*

THE LESSON SUMMARY

"Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God," is the pious, conventional remark of one of the guests at the Pharisee's house, which called forth from Jesus the parable of the Great Supper to remind him and the other guests that one may seemingly accept the blessedness of the kingdom of God and yet in reality refuse to enter it. Those first invited to the supper, one and all, made excuses and refused the invitation; preoccupied as they were with their own pleasures and interests, they gave no thought to God's message through Christ that "the kingdom of heaven is at hand." God passed from those first invited to the outcasts among the Jews themselves, and then to the Gentiles afar, that His table might be furnished with guests, His bounty not be wasted.

Then in prophetic words Jesus gave a solemn warning to those around Him who had refused Him, "I say unto you, that none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper." Did any one ever approach the Great Teacher in ability to convey a solemn truth in a tactful yet forceful way?

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The Jews' view and Christ's teaching in regard to the kingdom of God.

2. The excuses represent preoccupation. "There are preoccupied minds, preconceived opinions, religious prejudices that keep from the kingdom. Christ came teaching that God is a Father, and His doctrine met with no acceptance because the public mind was preoccupied with the conception of God merely as The High and Lofty One, living above the world. He came offering to His contemporaries, in His own person, a meek, lowly, suffering Messiah, a man of sorrows and tenderest human

sympathies; but the minds of the "wise and understanding" were preoccupied with an entirely different ideal, that of a conquering Christ who sought and received honor from the world, and made all things serve His ambition. *A. B. Bruce.*

3. Excuse-making puts forward the comfort, the convenience, or the whim of the individual, as a reason for counting him exempt from some duty he does not like. It gives to such reasons for neglect of duty a force we never would give them for a neglect of pleasure. It keeps a man from church because of slight indispositions and disturbances of the weather which would not detain him from business. On a plea of needful economy, it shuts purses against claims of benevolence or religion, which open quickly enough to outlay on social follies.

The worst of all habits is the making excuses for ourselves to ourselves. We resolve our faults into the effect of bad influences or a bad heredity. Or we compare ourselves with our neighbors, and find we are "no worse than other people," but perhaps a trifle better. *Sunday School Times.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Tell the parable of the lost sheep (Luke 15.3-7) and of the lost coin (Luke 15.8-10). 2. What called forth the parable of the Prodigal Son? (Luke 15.1, 2.) 3. Who is represented by the self-righteous elder brother? By the unrighteous younger brother? 4. By what other titles might this parable be called? 5. Write the story of the parable in four scenes: first, the prodigal in his sin (vv. 12, 13); second, in his wretchedness (vv. 14-16); third, in his penitence (vv. 17-20); fourth, on his return (vv. 20-24). 6. What other verses of Jesus have told of God's love? (Matt. 5.45; Luke 6.35; John 3.16; 14.21, 23; 15.9, 10; 17.23.) 7. Tell the story of the jealousy of Joseph's brethren. (Gen. 37.4-28.) 8. What sin had Absolom committed against his father, and yet how did David mourn his loss? (2 Sam. 15.1-12; 18.19-33.)

BETWEEN LESSON VI AND LESSON VII

To a great multitude Jesus told what He required of true disciples, and by means of the parables of a man who began to build a tower which he was not able to finish and of the king going to war, He taught that one must count beforehand the cost of discipleship.

Because the Pharisees and scribes murmured at the crowd of publicans and sinners who came to hear Him, Jesus told the three parables of the lost—the Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin, and the Lost Son. (Luke 14.25-15.10.)

THE PARABLE OF THE TWO SONS

Luke 15.11-32. (Read Luke 7.36-50; 15.1-10; 19.1-9.) Commit vv. 17, 18.

Golden Text

Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord. Mal. 3.7.

Time: January, A. D. 30.
Place: Perea. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 74–77.

LESSON TEXT. LUKE 15.11-32

11 And he said, A certain man had two sons:
12 And the younger of them said to *his* father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth *to me.* And he divided unto them *his* living.
13 And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.
14 And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want.
15 And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.
16 And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.
17 And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!
18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee,
19 And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.
20 And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.
21 And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.
22 But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put *it* on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on *his* feet;
23 And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill *it;* and let us eat, and be merry:
24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.
25 Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard musick and dancing.

26 And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant.
27 And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound.
28 And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and intreated him.
29 And he answering said to *his* father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends:
30 But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf.
31 And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.
32 It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

11. *A certain man had two sons.* The father represents God, the elder brother, the Scribes and Pharisees, in their severity and pride, the younger brother, the publicans and sinners in their sin and repentance.

12. *Give me the portion of goods that falleth to me.* His portion would be one-third, that of the elder brother, two-thirds. (Deut. 21.17.)

16. *Husks.* Not corn husks, but the pods of the carob-tree on which the swine were fattened. They were sometimes eaten by the very poorest people.

17. *When he came to himself.* Thus implying that he had been "beside himself."

28. *He was angry.* A very slight description of his state of mind into which various bad feelings would enter: disgust, chagrin that all this merriment had been going on for hours and they had not thought it worth while to let him know—an impolitic oversight; a sense of wrong and general unfair treatment of which this particular neglect was but a specimen. *Bruce.*

30. *This thy son.* He will not say "my brother."

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

12. *The younger son.* The Prodigal Son has been a favorite theme of artists. The return is often treated, as in the magnificent picture by Murillo in the gallery of the Duke of Sutherland. The youth is locked in his father's embrace. His emaciated countenance tells of his suffering, and the embroidery on his tattered robe of the splendor of his riotous living. A little white dog leaps up to caress him. On one side, a man and a boy lead in the fatted calf, and on the other, approach three servants bearing a light blue silk dress of Spanish fashion and the gold ring. The Dutch painters usually portray the riotous living. An interest-

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ing picture by the younger Teniers in the Louvre, represents the prodigal feasting with two courtesans at the table in front of an inn, on the open shutter of which a tavern score is chalked. In the right-hand corner is a sty, where a boor is feeding swine. Holbein represents him

The Prodigal Son
(From a Painting by Edouard Dubule)

feasting with his mistress and gambling with a sharper, who is sweeping money off the table. The other parts of the story are portrayed in the background. The life among the swine is treated by Jordaens in the Dresden Gallery. The youth with only a cloth about his loins, approaches a trough where swine are feeding, extending his hand and seeming to ask food of a surly swineherd, who points him to the trough. In the left-hand corner a young rustic is playing on a pipe, a sorrowful contrast to the delicious music of the halls of pleasure. *Marvin R. Vincent in The Bible as Literature.*

The Parables of the Lost. A simple perusal of the three Parables grouped together in the fifteenth chapter of St. Luke's Gospel, will convince us of their connection. They are Gospel-Parables "of the recovery of the lost." In the first instance, through the unwearied labor; in the second, through the anxious care of the owner; and in the third parable, through the never-ceasing love of the Father.

Properly to understand these parables, the circumstances which elicited them must be kept in view. As Jesus preached the Gospel of God's call, not as to those who had, as they imagined, prepared themselves for the kingdom by study and good works, but as that to a door open, and a welcome free to all, "all the publicans and sinners were (constantly) drawing near to him." The Jewish teaching concerning repentance was quite other than, nay, contrary to, that of Christ. Theirs was not a Gospel to the lost: they had nothing to say to sinners. They called on them to "do penitence," and then Divine Mercy, or rather Justice, would have its reward for the penitent. Christ's Gospel was to the lost as such. It told them of forgiveness, of what the Saviour was doing, and the Father proposed and felt for them; and that, not in the future and as reward of their penitence, but now in the immediate present. *Edersheim, Life and Times of Christ.*

13. *Took his journey into a far country.* And now it must be well with him at last; he has got what he desires; no other is lord over him. Henceforth he is his own master; but only to find the truth of that line which the poet wrote, and to which so many, the poet himself included, have set their seal:

"Lord of himself; that heritage of woe." *Trench.*

18. *I have sinned against heaven and before thee.* We may *injure ourselves* by an evil, we may *wrong our neighbor;* but, strictly speaking, we can *sin* only against *God;* and the recognition of our evil as first and chiefly an offense against Him, is of the essence of all true repentance, and distinguishes it broadly from remorse, and all other kinds of sorrow which may follow our evil deeds. *Trench.*

22. *Bring forth the best robe.* There are no degrees in forgiveness. There are degrees in the holiness that follows forgiveness; but pardon must be perfect at its birth. If the prodigal had been a hired servant previous to his fall, he would have been made a hired servant again. There would have been no sting in that; it would have involved no stigma. But to make him a servant after he had been a son would have perpetuated the pain of memory. Nothing impedes any progress like remembrance of a dark yesterday. When the page is already blotted, I am apt to blot it more. I lose heart; I say, "It is already tarnished; what does it matter now?" If I am to get a fair start, it must be a bright start—a start with the ring and robe. *George Matheson.*

This is a picture of God's full, free, unconditioned forgiveness to all who seek Him, and call upon Him, and repent of their old sins. *Farrar.*

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LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

15. *He sent him into his fields to feed swine.* To a Jew "a feeder of swine" was in the lowest depths of degradation. Jews so abhorred swine that they would not even speak of them by name, calling them instead, "the other things." The polite Moslem to-day who mentions swine hastens to add, "begging pardon for the allusion."

20. *Fell on his neck and kissed him.* The robe is open about the throat, and it is a common custom in Eastern countries to salute friends by kissing one another on the neck.

23. *Bring hither the fatted calf.* On the large farms in Palestine there was usually a calf being fatted for special occasions. It was roasted and served whole.

22. *A ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet.* Shoes were worn only by freemen, never by slaves. The giving of the ring was an emblem of restoring him not only to freedom, but to dignity and power. The ring, which in the East is always also a signet or seal, is only worn by men of position or property. It is the symbol of social rank, equivalent to armorial bearings in European countries. *Tristram, Eastern Customs.*

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Travelers upon one of the great ocean liners recently were greatly interested in an incident which occurred in mid-ocean. There were many caged birds in the hold of the ship, and one of them managed to make its escape. It soared off into the sky on glad wings. Many hours afterwards it was seen struggling toward the ship, and at last it settled down upon the deck, gasping and almost spent. The ship had been to it a prison, but after going "into a far country" where there was no spot to rest, it turned about and sought the ship again; the ship was now no longer a prison but a haven of refuge. Like this bird's was the going forth and return of the Prodigal Son in Christ's parable.

For Older Pupils. Dickens, the great master of pathos, said that the most touching story in all literature is the story of the Prodigal Son. "The crown and pearl of all our Lord's parables," it has well been called. John B. Gough used to tell how an ignorant Bible-reader would gather a rough crowd about him, and with open Bible in hand would begin his talk in this way: "Fellers, I've got a book here that tells the strangest story ever you heard. It's about a cove that got all the money the old man could give him, and then run away." Then he pictured to them the Prodigal Son as a youth from a respectable London family throwing away his opportunities, leaving his home, spending his time in gin-shops and gambling dens. When he had described the youth's misery in words his hearers could well comprehend, and then brought

him at last, penitent, to his father's arms, "right on the door-step of his home," uncouth men and women sobbed aloud.

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. Coming to One's Self

When He Came to Himself. A curious expression! Several expressions of a similar character are in common use. When a person is recovering from a swoon, we say, "He is coming to himself." When a man is carried away with anger, we speak of him as "beside himself with rage." Of a man who has gone mad, we say, "He is not himself."

You all know that every living seed or germ carries with it a something which causes it to grow into the particular thing it eventually becomes. One bulb becomes a hyacinth, another an onion.—Why? Each is somehow or other controlled from within, and so directed as to assume the form which it afterwards exhibits. The principle may be called its *idea*. . . .

Now what is true of plants is true of man. Each of us carries within himself a principle or idea of himself which he is intended to realize, to work out into an actuality. The differences between us and plants are these—that whilst plants are neither aware of having an ideal to realize nor have any control over themselves, we are aware that there is an idea to be worked out, and, in addition, have a certain free control over the working out. This idea is what is meant by our true, our real self. Thus, you see when a man *comes to himself*—comes, that is, to his true self, he begins to take due heed to the idea of his being which he came into the world to realize. What ought I to become and do? What am I made to be and do? What does my real manhood require of me?—These were in essence the questions which the prodigal asked, and which every man asks when he begins to come to himself. *D. W. Simon.*

Decision Needed. When the prodigal came to himself he decided firmly to leave the swine and be a man again. "I will," he said.

"Life is like a stream in which all things that are dead drift down, and only those things work up that possess the power of decisive resistance. Men are caught in the current of weakness of will, the current of sin, the current of cowardice, the current of selfishness or meanness, and, wanting the quality of quick, sharp decisiveness, are swung away from their moorings and adrift before the will is awake and the resistant forces can be summoned to action. *Robert E. Speer.*

The Beginning of a Better Life. There is hope for any one who frankly recognizes his moral state. There is in him the germ of the good life. The reformation of the prodigal began when he came to himself. He had persistently deceived himself into thinking that he

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was having a good time. The throwing off of the mask that hid him from himself was not only a preparation for the better life—it was the beginning of it. The one who is honest with himself has some ground for self-respect. *George Albert Coe.*

He Who Knows God Knows Himself. In the Shinto temples in Japan the shrines contain no altars, pulpits, or pictures, but only a circular steel mirror. What it means is not known; but it would be no inappropriate symbol in a Christian shrine, to set forth the self-revealing power of the word of God. . . . The man who studies God, studies self at the same time; the man who steadfastly follows Christ, learns as much about self as he learns of Christ. Self-knowledge is the hardest kind of knowledge. . . . When Christ persuades us to deny and lay aside self, He puts self in a position where we can study it from without; where we can weigh and test it by high standards; where we can set it with all its greed and conceit and sophistry and littleness, beside the perfect manhood of Jesus Christ, and, in the light of His symmetry and purity, see it as it really is: and hence the Psalmist says, "Thou hast set our secret sins in the light of thy countenance." *Marvin R. Vincent.*

If We Know Ourselves We Will Change Ourselves. It is said that the leather made from the branded cattle of our western ranges is thicker and firmer on the side where the brand is than on the other. Could you reason why? The cattle favor the wounded side by lying on the other; they do this so long that a habit is formed. The skin on the side that has been burned, being exposed to wind and sun more than the other, becomes the thicker and firmer. Thus the injured, weaker side becomes the stronger side. If we know wherein we are weak in our character we will by patient and long continued effort make that particular element one of the strongest and noblest parts of our character.

II. The Father's Forgiveness

God is Love. This parable is the perfect exposition of the Divine Benignity, the final revelation of the Fatherhood of God. . . . Hitherto the terror of God lay heavy on the human mind. The greatest of Greek dramatists can only conceive of God as the President of the Immortals, pursuing man with the ardor of a cruel huntsman. Even Job, swayed between resignation and resentment, can not subdue the thought that he is the sport of a divine malice, and he cries in the bitterness of his soul, "Thou scarest me with dreams and terrifiest me through visions." In all elementary religions the same thought is expressed. Æschylus does but utter what the meanest savage feels when he heaps propitiations on the altar of the devil-god. Jesus abolishes this terror of the gods with a word. *William J. Dawson.*

Lachlan Campbell's Forgiveness. Do you remember how Lach-

Ian Campell in Ian Maclaren's beautiful story, *The Bonnie Briar Bush,* watched and waited for the coming of his daughter? He had been a stern old man, this Lachlan Campbell, sitting in judgment upon all who erred, and when his daughter Flora ran away to London, he himself moved at the next meeting of the Session of his church that her name be crossed from the roll. Then afterwards he learned to know the loving kindness of Christ, and he learned to forgive as he hoped to be forgiven. He wrote to his daughter asking her to come home, and every night he placed the lighted lamp in the window, thinking she would return at night. "Every night till Flora returned, its light shone down the steep path that ascended to her home, like the divine love from the open door of our Father's house."

This is Flora's story as she told it to Marget Howe. She had crept into a church to hear the singing. "The sermon was on the Prodigal Son, but there is only one word I remember. 'You are not forgotten or cast off,' the preacher said, 'you are missed.' Sometimes he will say, 'If you had a plant, and you had taken great care of it, and it was stolen, would you not miss it?' And I will be thinking of my geraniums, and saying, 'Yes,' in my heart. And then he will go on, 'If a shepherd was counting his sheep, and there was one short, does he not go out to the hill to seek it?' and I will see my father coming back with that lamb that lost its mother. My heart was melting within me, but he will still be pleading, 'If a father had a child, and she left her home and lost herself in the wicked city, she will still be remembered in the old house, and her chair will be there,' and I will be seeing my father all alone with the Bible before him, and the dogs will lay their heads on his knee, but there is no Flora. So I slipped out into the darkness and cried, 'Father,' but I could not go back, and I knew not what to do. But this was ever in my ear, 'missed.'"

And this word finally brought her back to her home and her father's love and to God.

When her father begged her forgiveness for erasing her name from the Bible, she wrote in the vacant place:

"Flora Campbell.
Missed, April, 1873.
Found, September, 1873.
"Her father fell on her neck and kissed her."

I. Jealousy

The Elder Brother's Sin. The elder brother, hard-working, patient, dutiful—let him get full credit for his virtues—comes in from his long day's work in the fields. As he nears the old homestead, he hears the noise of mirth and music. He makes out the strains of a dancing

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measure—a novel sound, surely, for the dull farm. "Thy brother is come"; the servant says, "and they have killed the fatted calf." "Brother, indeed!" he mutters, "the scapegrace! killed the fatted calf, have they? more than they ever did for me. I can teach them what *I* think of their merrymaking. And talk of reward of virtue! Here have I been all these years unhonored and ignored, and this young roué from the swine troughs assembles the whole country-side to do him homage."

And he was angry and would not go in. "Oh the baby!" one inclines to say at first; but it is more than this. It is the thunder-cloud, a thunder-cloud which has been brewing under his virtues all his life. It is the thunder-cloud, the subtle fluids from a dozen sins have come together for once, and now they are scorching his soul. Jealousy, anger, pride, uncharity, cruelty, self-righteousness, sulkiness, touchiness, doggedness, all mixed up together into one—ill temper. *Henry Drummond.*

Men Who Might Have Been Jealous. One of the worst things with which Christian people have to contend is jealousy. It were, indeed, well if we all possessed the feeling that animated Moses when Joshua asked him to forbid Eldad Medad from prophesying in the camp: "And Moses said unto him, Enviest thou for my sake? would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit upon them."

If ever there were two men who had reason to be jealous, they were Jonathan and John the Baptist; but the one stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David; and the other, when his disciples sought to arouse John's jealousy of Him of Whom he came to bear witness, on account of the great crowds who flocked to His ministry, answered and said, "A man can receive nothing except it be given him from above. Ye yourselves bear me witness that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him." *D. L. Moody.*

An Evil Eye. Scripture calls envy "an evil eye," as when it tells us that "Saul eyed David." The sensitive pride of small natures finds it intolerable that any man should excel them, or be preferred before them. In the wild picture of Salvator Ross, a youth, with uplifted poniard and the face of a demon, follows his young rival, who has won the crown, ready to stab him in the back. Let a man rise but the millionth part of an inch above his fellows, and there will be many to attack him, to belittle him, to abuse him anonymously. *F. W. Farrar, The Voice from Sinai.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Base envy withers at another's joy. *Thomson.*

Jealousy of others' worth slowly kills one's own worth.

The parable is the Master's dramatic way of saying, "God is love." *David Gregg.*

Do not feed on husks when angel food may be yours. *E. E. White.*

A sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things. *Tennyson.*

No sooner is the *I will* spoken than there is a reversing of all the wheels; the hands follow whither the heart has gone. *Wm. M. Taylor.*

Who draws near to me an inch, I will draw near him an ell, and whoso walks to meet me, I will leap to meet him. *Oriental Proverb.*

No prodigal ever yet became a saint who could not have been a better saint if he had never been a prodigal. *G. Edward Young.*

The elder brother's were the thoughts of a servant: of service and return; the younger brother's were the welcome of a son in the mercy and everlasting love of a father. *Edersheim.*

God always *is* the loving Father of all men; nevertheless, men must *become* sons of the Heavenly Father by attaining His spirit of gratuitous, forgiving love. *Wendt.*

Because I spent the strength Thou gavest me
In struggle which Thou never didst ordain,
And have but dregs of life to offer Thee,
O Lord, I do repent, I do repent. *Sarah Williams.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies. Psa. 119.59.

Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you. Jas. 4.8.

They that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing. Psa. 34.10.

I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight. Psa. 51.3, 4.

I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord. Psa. 32.5.

Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. Psa. 103.13.

Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth. Luke 15.7.

Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who is able to stand before envy? Prov. 27.4.

Jealousy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame. Song of Sol. 8.6.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Remembering that those whom I most sternly judge may, at that very moment, be more sternly judging themselves, I will try to learn from my Master that divine charity of which He Himself was the first example; I will learn from Him to play more nobly than did the elder son in His parable the elder brother's part. *G. H. Knight.*

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THE LESSON SUMMARY

What a combination of vivid portraiture, startling incident, pathos, and dramatic power is the parable of the Prodigal Son; yet how condensed; how few and how telling the strokes; how broad and free yet how definite the outlines! How promptly and directly the main motive of the story is struck! No tedious analysis is needed to acquaint the reader with the characters. How vivid the picture of dissipation in the far country, a picture which is partly lost in the English version. "He made his substance fly, living unsavoringly." No need to dilate upon the misery of the young debauchee; it is effectively portrayed by two or three strong, rapid touches, a hireling in the fields, feeding swine, hungry and eating swine's food. What deep suggestiveness in the words "when he came to himself," as if he had but now awakened from a long delirium.

Then the quickened movement with which the story gathers itself up and presses to its blessed close. One feels the eagerness with which the poor wretch hastens back to his home, and finds the floods rushing to his eyes as he follows him into the clasp of his father's arms; and finally, what consummate art is that which has conveyed into the climax of the story the glad tumult which pervades the house! How the orders pour from the happy father! My son has come back. Quick! Bring the best robe! Bring the shoes! Bring the ring! Get ready the feast! Let us eat and drink and be merry! This my son was dead and is alive again, was lost and is found. *Marvin R. Vincent, in The Bible as Literature.*

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. It is an amazing thing how men do waste the gifts of life! nay, "waste" is a slight word, how they squander, lavish, spill, devour them—how they empty themselves of all that is pure and noble in life, as when one wipeth out a dish and turneth it upside down. *F. W. Farrar.*

2. God intends that the way of the transgressor should be hard, and if you insist on making it soft, you encourage the transgressor to keep right on in it. The prodigal had no right to be living in a far country, feeding swine and hungry enough to eat husks. It was possible for him to be living as the son of his father, with bread enough and to spare. It served to remind him of all this, and to aid him in coming to himself, when "no man gave unto him." . . .

A wise refusal may be ten times more loving than a soft consent. Our good sense and our experience must choose the line of treatment that in the long run will prove loving. The surgeon who fearlessly cuts away a dangerous cancer even though his patient writhes, is more loving than the one who lets it grow and kill the man. *Charles R. Brown.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. The Parable of the Unjust Judge is a companion to that of the Selfish Neighbor. Repeat the latter parable. 2. Compare the conduct of the disciples as disclosed in Matt. 15.23 with that of the Unjust Judge in v. 5 of our next lesson. 3. In what recent lesson were we shown the value of importunity in prayer? (July 22.) 4. What did Christ say about sincerity in prayer in Matt. 6.5-15? 5. In what recent lesson did Jesus repeat the last part of v. 14? (July 29.) See also Matt. 23.12. 6. Read John the Baptist's characterization of the Pharisees in Matt. 3.7-10. 7. Of what Beatitude is the Publican an example? (The poor in spirit.)

BETWEEN LESSON VII AND LESSON VIII

Two parables of warning about the right use of wealth follow the three parables about The Lost. The parable of the Unjust Steward shows the power of wealth to make friends, and the duty of using wealth in the service of God. The parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus teaches that he who uses wealth selfishly in this world is punished in the next world. Discourses on forgiveness, faith, and humility follow.

Word came to Jesus that Lazarus, the brother of Martha and Mary, was dead, and despite the remonstrance of His disciples, who feared for His life in Judea, Jesus went to Bethany and restored Lazarus to life after he had been dead four days.

Hitherto the active opposition to Jesus had come from the Pharisees; now both Pharisees and chief priests, most of whom were Sadducees, "took counsel together to put Him to death," after Caiaphas, the high priest, had declared that "it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." "Therefore Jesus walked no more openly among the Jews, but went into a city called Ephraim." (Luke 16.1-17, 10; John 11.)

On the way to Jerusalem Jesus passed through Galilee, and healed ten lepers, only one of whom, a Samaritan, turned back to thank Him.

To the question of the Pharisees as to when the kingdom of God should come, Jesus answered that "the kingdom of God is within you." As for the coming of the Son of Man, it will be after His rejection and suffering and at a time when unexpected. (Luke 17.11-37.)

THE JUDGE, THE PHARISEE, AND THE PUBLICAN

Luke 18.1-14. (Read Mark 7.24-30; Luke 11.1-13.) Commit vv. 13,14.

Golden Text

God be merciful to me a sinner. Luke 18.13.

Time: March, A. D. 30.
Place. Perea. Geography Lesson, paragraphs, 78-80.

LESSON TEXT. LUKE 18.1-14

1 And he spake a parable unto them *to this end,* that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;
2 Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man:
3 And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.
4 And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man;
5 Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.
6 And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.
7 And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?
8 I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?
9 And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:
10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.
11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men *are,* extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.
12 I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.
13 And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as *his* eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.
14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified *rather* than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *Them.* The disciples. *To this end.* To show. This parable has its key hanging at the door. *Henry. Always to pray.* The word *always* must not be understood in respect of time, as if it meant continuously, but at all times, in the sense of under all circumstances, however, apparently adverse, when it might seem as if an answer could not come, and we would therefore be in danger of "fainting," or becoming weary. *Edersheim.*

2. *Which feared . . . man.* This was a proverbial expression for a wholly unprincipled man.

3. *A widow.* And therefore in the East, helpless. *Avenge me.* Do me justice.

5. *Lest she weary me.* Lest she wear me out by her continual coming. The verb is a sort of slang term, not unsuitable to the coarse, unjust judge. Literally, "lest she blacken me under the eye," or, "bruise me." *Farrar.*

7. *His own elect.* The Greek word for elect, ἐκλεκτός, is elsewhere used in the Bible for chosen, choice, faithful, or precious. "A nation or an individual may be 'chosen' or 'elect,' as especially fitted to carry out a design of Providence, as the people of Israel were; or persons may be 'chosen' or 'elect' as true and faithful above others." *Charles J. Abbey. Though he bear long with them.* The best sense seems to be: Though he is long-suffering, *i. e.,* delays the vengeance just spoken of, "on their behalf," or "over them," either "on their case," or "on their account." *Riddle.*

8. *When the Son of man cometh.* At His second coming. *Nevertheless.* Notwithstanding God is certain to vindicate, will the Son of Man find on earth a persistence in faith answering to the widow's? *Vincent.*

11. *Stood.* A common attitude of prayer among the Jews. Here it implies that he took a conspicuous place. *Prayed with himself.* His prayer was not really a communing with God, but a communing with himself. *Riddle.*

12. *Tithes.* A tenth part.

13. *A sinner,* R. V., *the sinner.*

14. *Justified, i. e.,* accounted as righteous, accepted. The Talmud says, "So long as the temple stood, no Israelite was in distress; for as often as he came to it full of sin and offered sacrifice, then his sin was forgiven and he departed a just man." *Plummer.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

5. *Lest she weary me.* We can annoy a man, like the ungenerous neighbor or the unjust judge, but we can not annoy God. The passage does not suggest the true explanation of divine delay, or of the ultimate

success of importunity. It merely proves, by a homely instance, that delay, apparent refusal, from whatever cause it may arise, is not necessarily final, and therefore can be no good reason for giving up asking. *A. B. Bruce.*

7. *Though he bear long with them.*

It is not so, but so it looks;
And we lose courage then;
And doubts will come if God hath kept
His promises to men. *Faber.*

8. *Neverthelcss, when the Son of man . . . earth.* You can hardly imagine a greater contrast than the magnificent hopefulness with which He says, "Shall God avenge his own elect?" I tell you that He will avenge them speedily—with magnificent confidence in the power of God. And then, with a kind of reaction, as He looked down the ages, and saw men who would undermine the faith; men who through timidity would not accept it; men who, through the clouds of doubt, would find the great sun hid from their eyes, He said, "Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" *F. W. Ingram.*

9. *Despised others.* The Jews always spoke disparagingly of all outside their own communion as "Gentiles." And the Greek contemptuously styled those who had not enjoyed the blessing of Athenian culture, "Barbarians." There are Christians who spend all their time thanking the Lord they are not as other men, and there are scholars who never imagine that an uneducated soul is capable of fine feelings, and lofty aspirations. There is Carlyle, learned, profound, literary, who yet says of his compatriots, "There are in England about forty millions of people, mostly fools." And even our own Emerson again and again complains that in his travels he finds no one worth talking to. . . .

How shall we learn to reverence all men? There is help in the thought of a modern writer: "Every man I meet is my master in some point, and in that I may learn of him." Still more help is there in the study of those noble lives that have molded society by means of this power of reverence. But we shall learn the lesson properly only when we come to the Perfect Life, only when we sit at the feet of Jesus and drink in His all-loving spirit. *George H. Hubbard.*

10. *Two men went up into the temple to pray.*

Two went to pray? Oh! rather say,
One went to brag, the other to pray.

One stands up close, and treads on high,
Where the other dares not lend his eye.

One nearer to God's altar trod;
The other to the altar's God. *Richard Crashaw.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

5. *Because this widow troubleth me.* In a court of justice in Mesopotamia a poor woman kept interrupting proceedings, although sternly commanded to be quiet and told that she came every day.

"So I will come till the *Kadi* hears me," she answered.

"What does the woman want?" angrily asked the judge.

"As a lone widow she should be exempt from taxes."

"Let her be exempt!" he exclaimed. *Tristram.*

10. *A publican.* The Talmuds often betray the scorn that they felt for the publicans. The testimony of a publican was not accepted in a court of justice.

In the Gospels, the publicans are often classed with sinners and Gentiles. By sinners we must understand here not men of immoral life, but simply those who did not accept the rules of the Pharisees, and were not exact in the observance of all religious rites. It is probable that the publicans were allowed no more rights than the heathen, and that the court of the Gentiles alone was open to them. The parable of the Pharisee and the publican tells us nothing on this point, for the publican in this instance may have stood afar off, not so much of necessity, as out of humbleness. *Edmond Stapfer.*

11. *The Pharisee stood and prayed thus.* If the fixed time for prayers had come, the Pharisee would stop short in the middle of the road, perhaps say one section of them, move on, again say another part, and so on, till, whatever else might be doubted, there could be no question of the conspicuousness of his devotion in market-place or corners of streets. There he would stand, as taught by the traditional law, would draw his feet well together, compose his body and clothes, and bend so low, "that every vertebra in his back would stand out separate." *Edersheim, Sketches.*

11. *I thank thee, that I am not as other men.* To show how this is a true portrayal of the boastful spirit of the Pharisee, Edersheim quotes this saying of Rabbi Simeon ben Jochai, that if there were only two righteous men in the world, he and his son were these, and if only one, it was he!

12. *I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all I possess.* Moses appointed only one fast day in the year, the great day of atonement (Lev. 16.29). The Pharisee fasted twice a week, "in pursuance of the custom of some 'more righteous than the rest,' who fasted on the second and fifth days of the week (Mondays and Thursdays). But, perhaps, we should not forget that these were also the regular market-days, when the country people came to towns, and there were special services in the synagogues, and the local sanhedrim met—so that these saints in Israel would, at the same time, attract and receive special notice for their fasts." *Edersheim.*

The law of Moses was that corn, wine, oil, and cattle should be tithed, but he, in accordance with the rabbinic laws, tithed everything.

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THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Do you remember the story that Hawthorne tells in *Tanglewood Tales* about the struggle between Antæus and Hercules? You remember that Hercules fought with a club until he was keen enough to see that the giant Antæus kept hopping up and down, and that he gained renewed strength every time his feet touched the earth. Then Hercules threw away his club, seized the earth-born giant around his waist, and held him aloft in the air. As soon as Antæus was fairly off the ground he began to grow weaker and weaker. The truth was that if Antæus did not touch the earth at least once in five minutes he would lose his life.

Just as Antæus in this impossible story could not keep his physical life without being in close connection with his mother earth, so we can not keep our spiritual life unless we keep in close relationship to God by means of prayer. And the more often we lift our thoughts to God the stronger we shall grow in faith and love. This is the thought that Jesus illustrates by His first parable of our lesson about the Unjust Judge.

For Older Pupils. The importance which Christ attaches to prayer is evidenced by the frequency with which He recurs to it in His teaching, and the variety of His illustrations of its duty and blessedness. The Sermon on the Mount enforces it as one of the cardinal virtues of the perfect disciple. In the eleventh chapter of this Gospel, both the manner after which we are to pray, and the assurance on which faith should rest, are presented. Here again, towards the close of the ministry, we are introduced to two parables bearing on it, each with the lesson which the Master would teach clearly defined. *J. Marshall Lang.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. Men Ought Always to Pray

Twirling a Prayer-Cylinder

Prayer Cylinders. The Buddhists are wont to write the prayers they desire to offer on a cylinder, and twirl this, under the notion that every time this cylinder is turned round the prayer is once offered. By a chain and ball on the cabinet in which the prayer cylinder is enclosed, some lamas in Tibet are enabled to keep up a constant praying for hours together. But they must stop to eat, at least, and thus the prayers can not be ceaseless. To overcome

this defect, some persons enclose the prayer scroll in a large cylinder, which they attach to a mill-wheel placed on an ever-flowing mountain stream, which keeps the cylinder revolving without cessation, and, on the theory that with each completed revolution the prayer is as devoutly offered as if uttered by the person who geared it to the water current, this person has the gratification of feeling that technically he prays without ceasing. *J. T. Gracey.*

The Lesson of the Ostrich Eggs. The observing eye notices in entering a Mohammedan mosque that a number of ostrich eggs are suspended from the dome. This is not a mere ornament introduced into some mosques, and wanting in others. It is an essential symbol, and is present in every mosque. It is a part of the religious service, as important almost as the place of prayer itself; for it tells every worshipper that, as the ostrich sits on its eggs with indefatigable patience day and night until they are hatched, so should the praying soul brood over its desires, and persevere in prayer until it is answered. *Hugh Macmillan.*

The Angelus. One of the best known pictures is Millet's *Angelus.* The bell in the distant steeple has rung the Angelus, the call to prayer. A young man and a young woman have thrown aside the implements with which they were working in a potato field, and with folded hands and bowed heads, stand in silent prayer. A traveler gives this interesting account of the way the Angelus summons the people of the Tyrol to worship.

"If you were to go through a Tyrolese village at six o'clock in the evening, you would hear from every cottage a hum like that of a hive of bees, every one, father and mother and children and servants, saying their prayers. It is much the same at noon, only then many of the people are out of doors in the fields, or in their gardens.

"One market-day at Innsbruck I was dining, and there was a party of farmers at another table having their dinner. The church bell rang the Angelus. Then they all rose up, and standing reverently, the oldest man in the party began the prayers, and the rest responded. And the women shopping were standing still in the market, and those at the booths selling stood also with folded hands, and the men had their hats off, and instead of the buzz of bargaining, rose the murmur of the prayer from all that great throng."

Not the Number but the Sincerity of Prayers Avails. God looks not at the oratory of your prayers, how elegant they may be; nor at the geometry of your prayers, how long they may be; nor at the arithmetic of your prayers, how many they be; but the sincerity of them He looks at. *Phillips Brooks.*

II. Self-Righteousness

The Example of the Pharisee. Lights are kindled on the seaboard, some to guide the ship in, others to warn her off: this burns at

the harbor's mouth, and that, a beacon of danger, flashes where the sea breaks foaming on a fatal reef. And the Pharisee has left us, not an example to follow, but to avoid. *Thomas Guthrie.*

We are infected with the leaven of the Pharisee when we in any way mistake means for ends; when we read the Bible or pray as if these occupations were duties to be done for their own sakes and not for the sake of the result they have; when we are satisfied with having attended church, though it has done us no good; when we allow religious service to be an end in itself and not a means towards something beyond itself. We are infected with the leaven of the Pharisee when we look more to the duties we do than to the spirit and motive from which they spring; when we become satisfied with ourselves because we do certain things which other men do not, and when in place of lowliness and charity, our religion is producing in us self-complacency and either a hard contempt or a compassionate patronage of other men. *Marcus Dods.*

The Prayer Answered. Archbishop Trench tells the story of a Persian poet that illustrates our parable. Jesus and a monk were together when a youth that was a sinner came to Him and implored His forgiveness. The monk, indignant at the interruption, told the youth that he had sinned beyond forgiveness. Then to Jesus the monk said, "Grant me this one thing—that I may stand far from this man in the judgment." Then Jesus said: "It shall be even so; the prayer of both is granted. This sinner has sought mercy, and has not sought it in vain. His sins are forgiven; his place shall be in Paradise at the last day. But this monk has prayed that he may never stand near this sinner. His prayer, too, is granted; hell shall be his place, which is far from Heaven."

The World Can Get Along without Us. "How are you feeling?" asked the angel of the prominent man.

"Oh, I am in a dreadful condition," said the man. "I slipped on a piece of ice this morning and broke my leg."

"Yes," said the angel, "I saw you fall."

"But," said the man, "my pain, which, by the way, is very severe (for he did not think that the angel looked sympathetic enough), "is the smallest part of it. I should by now be at a committee meeting, where they can do nothing without me. This afternoon there is a directors' meeting, where I was to be chairman; and this evening I was engaged to lecture on a subject of vital interest. This means disaster to the state, and it may be to the whole country." And he groaned aloud.

"Oh well," said the angel, "I would not worry about all that, if I were you."

"Not worry!" said the prominent man.

"No," said the angel. "The truth is, I put that piece of ice there myself. I wanted to get rid of you."

"Get rid of——" said the prominent man; and the rest was gasps.

"Yes," said the angel. "You see, I didn't want you at the committee-

meeting. There is a new man ready to come forward who knows much more than you, and if you had been there he would have been too modest to speak. Then, the directors are going to take action this afternoon on that important case, and if you were there they would vote the wrong way. As to the lecture, it would do more harm than good just now; but, when the crisis is passed, you may deliver it without doing any serious damage. So you see!"

"Good heavens!" cried the prominent man. "Am I awake, or is this a dream?"

"More or less," said the angel. "It is what you call Life."

Laura E. Richards.

III. Be Merciful to Me a Sinner

Confessions of Great Men. At Inverary Castle, Gladstone met with the Duke of Argyle and many other dukes and lords to discuss important questions of state. They met first for worship, and Doctor Guthrie asked some one to lead the singing. At once Gladstone arose and began singing with great pathos that old penitential hymn—

"Be merciful to me, O God;
Thy mercy unto me
Do thou extend, because my soul
Doth put her trust in Thee."

When Sir James Simpson, the discoverer of chloroform and one of the greatest scientists of Scotland, was asked what he considered his greatest discovery, he replied, "The greatest discovery I ever made is that I am a great sinner, and that Jesus Christ is a great Saviour."

Daniel Webster was once asked what was the greatest idea that had ever entered his mind. After a pause he answered, "The greatest idea that ever entered my mind is the idea of personal responsibility to a personal God."

Nothing to Say for Ourselves. We have all read of the passing of William MacLure in Ian Maclaren's touching idyl. "A'm gettin' drowsy," said the doctor to Drumsheugh, "read a bit tae me." Then Drumsheugh put on his spectacles and searched for some comfortable Scripture. Presently he began to read: "In my Father's house are many mansions," but MacLure stopped him. "It's a bonnie word," he said, "but it's no' for the likes o' me. It's ower guid; a' daurna tak' it." Then he bid Drumsheugh shut his book and let it open itself, and he would find the place where he had been reading every night for the last month. Drumsheugh did as he was bidden, and the book opened at the parable wherein the Master tells what God thinks of a Pharisee and a penitent sinner. And when he came to the words, "and the publican

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. . . me a sinner," once more the dying man stopped him; "That micht hae been written for me, Paitrick, or ony ither auld sinner that hes feenished his life, an' hes naething tae say for himsel'."

Nothing to say for ourselves—that is what it comes to, when we know the truth about ourselves.

"Not by works done in righteousness, which we did ourselves, but according to His mercy He saved us." *George Jackson.*

No Sin a Trifle. It is a fatal mistake to think that any wilful sin is a trifle. If you are lost, it is not likely that one huge sin like Judas', or Pilate's, or Ananias' will sink you to perdition. It will be the sum of your daily sins left unrepented of, the aggregate of thousands of offenses against God's law and God's love. In Sudbrook Park, England, a naturalist saw a small worm boring into the bark of a stately sycamore tree. "If that worm is let alone," said he, "it will kill the tree!" The experiment was tried. The next year the leaves turned yellow, and the year after the tree was a skeleton. Now if one sin is so deadly, what must a lifetime of sin be? *Theodore Cuyler.*

God is a God of Mercy. By the voice of your conscience or of His word does God say you have been a sinner? We reply, "Truth, Lord." There is no commandment of Mine you have not broken, and no mercy of Mine you have not abused. "Truth, Lord." You have grieved My spirit. "Truth, Lord." You deserve to be cast into hell. "Truth, Lord. It is all true; but, God of mercy, so is this, that Thou never saidst to any of the sons of men, 'Seek ye My face,' in vain; that Thou art not willing that any man should perish; that Thou didst send Thy Son to seek and to save the lost; that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin. We will hope in Thy mercy, for is it not written, 'The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear Him, in them that hope in His mercy?'" *Thomas Guthrie.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Self-knowledge is the cure of censoriousness. *Boardman.*

All Christian graces come to us through prayer. *Farrar.*

Prayer is God's own antidote for sin. *Farrar.*

Cold prayers are as birds without wings, they fly not to Heaven. *Brooks.*

God regarded the self-blaming sinner with more favor than the self-praising saint. *Bruce.*

Self-admiration effectually excludes a man from the admiration of others. *Marcus Dods.*

All the truly good are conscious that they have confessions to make which exclude all boasting. *A. B. Bruce.*

The moment a man is satisfied with himself, everybody else is dissatisfied with him. *Young Folks.*

Self-love makes us blind toward ourselves and sharp-sighted toward the actions of others. *Gossner.*

Never are we farther from God than when intoxicated by pride. *Nicoll.*

The Jew judged the Gentile, and this without mercy; and ever since the Gentile has been judging the Jew, and this almost without mercy. *George Dana Boardman.*

Oh, wad some Power the giftie gie us
To see oursel's as others see us!
It wad frae monie a blunder free us,
And foolish notion. *Robert Burns.*

When thou prayest, rather let thy heart be without words than thy words without heart; remember, emphatically, either prayer will make thee cease from sin, or sin will entice thee from prayer. *Bunyan.*

Only when you can say, there is nothing God can give me; only when you can say that already you have in actual and secure possession what you are ready to spend eternity with; only then can you reasonably cease to pray. *Marcus Dods.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates, which the Lord thy God giveth thee; throughout thy tribes; and they shall judge the people with just judgment. Deut. 16.18.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightiest matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Matt. 23.23.

Thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are; for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Matt. 6.5.

Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips. Prov. 27.2.

But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth. 2 Cor. 10.17-18.

Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. Rev. 3.17.

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. Eph. 2.8-9.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 1 John 1.8.

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When men are cast down, then thou shalt say, There is lifting up; and he shall save the humble person. Job 22.29.

Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving. Col. 4.2.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

I remember some years ago climbing the Weisshorn, above the Zermatt Valley, with two guides. My leading guide stood aside to let me be the first on the top. And I, with the long labor of the climb over, and exhilarated by the thought of the great view awaiting me, but forgetful of the high gale that was blowing on the other side of the rocks, sprang eagerly up them and stood erect to see the view. The guide pulled me down—"On your knees, sir, you are not safe there except on your knees."

My young friends, God lifts us all to summits in life; high, splendid and perilous. But these are nowhere more splendid or more perilous than in our youth—summits of knowledge, of friendship, of love, of success. Let us, as we value our moral health, the growth of our character and of our fitness for God's service, use every one of them as an altar, on which to devote ourselves once more to His will. *George Adam Smith.*

LESSON SUMMARY

In His parable about the Unjust Judge, Jesus emphasizes the same truth that is taught in the parable about the Selfish Neighbor. If a selfish, unjust judge will give heed to the petition of a widow in order to escape being bothered by her, can one not believe that God in whom there is no reluctance to be overcome, who is Justice itself, will listen to one's petitions? Delay is not denial; pray without ceasing.

In a second parable, as Doctor Henry Burton says: "Jesus puts the genuine and the counterfeit side by side, drawing the sharp contrast between them. He gives us the prayer of the Pharisee, windy, inflated, full of the self-eulogizing 'I.' It is the prayerless prayer, that has no need, and which was simply an incense burned before the clayey image of himself. Then He gives us a few brief words of the publican, the cry of a broken heart, 'God be merciful to me a sinner,' a prayer which reached directly the highest Heaven, and which came back freighted with the peace of God."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Corrupt judges. There has never been a Chief Justice of the United States who has not been a Christian man.

2. It is with most men as it was with Iago—they are nothing if they

are not critical. In ancient Rome they elected their censors; no need have we of electing ours, every man is a natural censor, a born critic. . . . Strange to say, this spirit of criticism is in a marked degree a besetting sin of the sons of the Kingdom. As in Jerusalem's temple, so in the temple of the soul, the Pharisee and the publican stand side by side; and one of the struggles of Christian life is not to let the Pharisee get the advantage of the publican. *George Dana Boardman.*

3. Jesus denounced most sternly such sins as selfishness, spiritual pride, hypocrisy, and mere religious formality, and these indeed, are the sins which are most inconsistent with holiness of spirit and righteousness of life. He understood that nothing else is so perilous or so mischievous spiritually as conceit. *The Congregationalist.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. With what remark in to-day's lesson can v. 20 of the next lesson be compared? 2. In what recent lesson was the first question of the young ruler asked? (July 15.) 3. v. 31 is emphasized in Matthew's gospel (20) by the parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard. Tell this parable. In Luke's gospel it is emphasized in 13.24-30. 4. In what lesson lately studied, did Jesus give the advice in the last part of v. 21 of the next lesson? (June 10.) 5. In what lesson of this quarter did Jesus advise giving up good things for the supreme good? (July 1.) 6. Read about the trial of Abraham in being told to sacrifice Isaac, in Gen. 22.1-14. 7. In what lesson of this quarter did Jesus tell how to gain entrance into the kingdom? (July 1.) Quote the verse. (Matt. 18.3.) 8. How did the early church carry out the command of Jesus to sell and give to the poor? (Acts 4.34-37). Would this be a wise thing to do now? 9. In the parable of the Sower (April 29) what is said about the deceitfulness of riches? (Mark 4.19.) 10. What characters of the Bible were ruined by the love of money? (Lot, Gehazi, Judas.) 11. In Luke 16.19-31 read the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. 12. Read what James says about making no distinction between rich and poor in the church. (Jas. 2.1-5.) 13. To whom is eternal life promised? (John 3.16; 5.24.)

BETWEEN LESSON VIII AND LESSON IX

"Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife?" asked the Pharisees. After inquiring what Moses commanded, Jesus said, "What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." The people brought little children to Jesus and the disciples rebuked them, but Jesus said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God," and taking them in His arms He blessed them. (Matt. 19.2-15; Mark 10.2-16; Luke 18.15-17.)

THE RICH YOUNG RULER

Mark 10.17-31. (Read Matt. 19.16-30; Mark 10.2-16.) Commit vv. 23, 24.

Golden Text

If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. Matt. 16.24.

Time: March, A. D. 30.
Place: Perea. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 81-83.

LESSON TEXT. MARK 10.17-31

17 And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?
18 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? *there is* none good but one, *that is,* God.
19 Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother.
20 And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth.
21 Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me.
22 And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions.
23 And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!
24 And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!
25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.
26 And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved?
27 And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men *it is* impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.
28 Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee.
29 And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's,
30 But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and

brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.

31 But many *that are* first shall be last; and the last first.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

17. *Into the way.* On the way from Perea to Jerusalem. *One.* Young (Matt. 19.22). Of great wealth (v. 22), a ruler of a synagogue (Luke 18.18). *Good Master,* R. V., *Master.*

18. *Why callest thou me good.* The emphasis is upon *why.* Jesus does not object to being called good, but he knows that the young man thinks of him merely as a "good rabbi," and uses the term *good* with as little thought as we do when we say *"Good morning."* R. V., *Why asketh thou me concerning that which is good? There is none good but God.* The questioner needed to acknowledge God as the Supreme God.

19. *Defraud not.* This seems as if intended to be a special application of the tenth commandment. *Plumptre.*

21. *Sell to the poor.* His stumbling-block was his wealth. As a test of obedience and faith in this particular case only, Jesus gave this direction.

24. *How hard . . . God!* Ovid called riches *Irritamenta malorum,* provocatives of evil.

25. To contrast the largest beast of burden known in Palestine with the smallest of artificial apertures is quite in the manner of Christ's proverbial sayings. *Swete.*

27. Man can not save himself; his salvation is of God.

28. *We* is the emphatic word.

30. Of course these words are not to be taken literally. The common joys of life will be multiplied. "The relations 'now in this time' are the spiritual affinities which bind the members of the family to God." *Swete.* Compare Matt. 12.50. *With persecutions.* The thoughts of the disciples were traveling on to one "hundredfold," as though it meant that all things should be smooth and prosperous with them. They are reminded that persecution in some shape, the trials that test and strengthen, are inseparable from the higher life of the kingdom. *Plumptre.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

17. *Kneeled to him.* Charles Lamb was once talking with his friends and discussing how they should feel and act in the presence of this or that great literary king of past ages, when one of them suddenly asked, "What would each of you do should Christ suddenly appear?" Reverently Charles Lamb replied: "If Shakespeare should come amongst us we should all rise; but if He should appear we should all kneel."

17. *Eternal life.* "Life is a parenthesis in eternity," says a fine old

classic. When an earth-born man is baptized into the spirit of Jesus the brackets are removed and he begins to live in the ageless state. "He that believeth on Me hath ageless life." This is Jesus' prophecy of life. *John Watson.*

19. *Thou knowest the commandments.* Our Lord did not even remind him of the first table, because this young ruler was sufficiently aware that obedience to the second table rests upon obedience to the first, and is impossible without it. . . .

When the young ruler heard that answer he was fairly amazed. He thought: Surely this great Teacher to whom I have come

"Seeking for some great thing to do,
Or secret thing to know,"

can not possibly give me as His answer that I am to keep these old, simple, elementary ten commandments, these ten words, as the Jews call them, which I have learned to lisp ever since I was on my mother's knee? He surely can not have that meaning? He must mean something far beyond that? It was exactly like the child in the great poem who, having been talked to continually about the glory and the majesty of the sea, and being led to the seaside said, "Is that the mighty ocean? Is that all?" *F. W. Farrar.*

20. *All these things have I observed.* His soul was like a boat tied fast, but tied with a long rope. It was able to struggle up the channel, past headland and light and buoy that marked the way; but always something held it back from perfectly laying itself at rest beside the golden shore. "What lack I yet?" And then said Jesus, "Go and sell all that thou hast, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow me." He did not say, "You do not deserve wealth." He did not say, "It is wicked to be rich." He only said, "You will be free if you are poor, and then I can lead you to the Father, in whom you shall find yourself." He went back, past the buoys and headlands, down the bay to where the rope was tied, and cut the boat loose from its anchorage. *Phillips Brooks.*

21. *One thing thou lackest.* Suppose a journeyman, wilful and self-satisfied, came to one of us and asked for employment. We go to a master-mechanic seeking work for him in his poverty. Each one in turn says he is well acquainted with the man, but will have nothing to do with him. Now we begin to expostulate: "Is he not skilful? Is he not industrious? Is he not honest? Is he not sober?" "All this is true," comes the reply; "but the man will not obey orders!" The prime quality of a workman is gone; that lack vitiates all the rest; he breeds insubordination wherever he goes. His excellencies simply render him dangerous. One thing he lacks, and that wanting, the rest are ruined." *Charles S. Robinson.*

22. He went away grieved. Dante says that in his journey through hell he saw him "who with ignoble spirit made the great refusal" searching for his lost opportunity.

I have the impression that if this young man had responded to Christ, and had realized that his money stood between him and the ideal life, he would have said, "I will get rid of every penny to-morrow." I think Christ would have said, "No, you may keep it; keep it all; the snare of the devil has been broken." When Abraham was willing to give up Isaac as sacrifice, God allowed him to keep him. It is the spirit of the thing. Francis of Assisi, saint as he was, made the great mistake of supposing that on a larger scale we should literally become paupers. Let them retain their money. Let them not starve themselves. You are the stewards of a God who wishes you to be handsomely paid. He does not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. He is willing to give you very large and generous commissions on what you do in His name, and for the trouble you take in looking after His business. *Hugh Price Hughes.*

A Rich Man's House in Jerusalem

27. With God all things are possible. Oliver Wendell Holmes tells us that some ideas are so great that when they once find entrance into a human mind they permanently stretch it and leave it for ever afterwards bigger. Surely this declaration of our Lord's embodies one of these mind-expanding ideas. *Benjamin B. Warfield.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

17. There came one running. No common reason will ever lead the Oriental to break his slow, sedate, and dignified walk. *Ewing. And kneeled to him.* To kneel before our Lord was more than a conventional form of respect; it was a recognition of a spiritual authority above that of priest or rabbi, especially when combined with the address of "Good Master," which it was incorrect to apply to any living man in his presence, and the epithet is never applied, in the Talmud, even to the greatest rabbis. *Tristram.*

20. All these things have I observed from my youth. When the angel of death came to fetch the Rabbi Chamina, he said, "Go and fetch me the

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Book of the Law, and see whether there is anything in it which I have not kept." *Farrar.*

25. *It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle.* Similar proverbs, to express what is very difficult or impossible to do, are still current among the Arabs. Roberts quotes this saying. "Just as soon will an elephant pass through the spout of a kettle."

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON.

For Younger Pupils. What does the word *sacrifice* mean? If you give away something that you don't care for, is that a sacrifice? If you give something that you care only a little for, in exchange for something that you care much for, is that a great sacrifice? Livingstone, who spent so many years of his life in Africa, said that many people spoke to him about his great sacrifice of his life, but that he counted it not a sacrifice for it was a privilege.

There is always a "cross" in every sacrifice. What does *cross* mean in this use of the word? If you have read that interesting book, *Tom Brown's School-Days,* you remember that little Arthur was greatly troubled in thinking about going to bed. Shall he kneel down and say his prayers before all the boys? Will they not all laugh at him? The thought that he ought, nevertheless, to say his prayers was to him a great cross. But he knew that he must sacrifice his feelings for the sake of his principles. Jesus once asked a young man to make a very great sacrifice.

For Older Pupils. Three centuries ago, if a man was well, or *weal,* to use the Old English word, he was said to be blessed with wealth. When the Authorized Version of our Bible was written in 1611, no one misunderstood the meaning of 1 Cor. 10.24, "Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth." Now, however, the explanation has to be given that *wealth* here has its original meaning of *welfare.* To us, wealth means abundance of material good, financial welfare.

Riches have always been prized. Away back in the time of Abraham riches were considered a mark of God's favor. In the time of Christ the priests were using their office so as to amass private fortunes. Then, as now, "all doors flew open to the rich," and it was a new thought, that of our lesson of to-day, that riches were to some a positive hindrance to entrance into the Kingdom of God.

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

1. The Lord Maketh Poor, and Maketh Rich. 1 Sam. 2.7.

Neither Poverty nor Riches Should be a Stumbling-block. Washington was rich, one of the richest men in the colonies; Lincoln was poor, one of the poorest men of his time. But note this significant and im-

portant fact for us to consider and remember for ever — when you think of Washington, that he was rich is not the first thing to think of; when you think of Lincoln, your attention is not fastened on the fact that he was poor.

The two men illustrate the great truth that here in this Republic manhood is supreme, and that manhood may be attained by both the rich and the poor—by the rich and the poor equally and alike. Washington used his wealth merely as an opportunity, something setting him free and giving him advantage in the matter of devoting himself to the service of his country and his time; and Lincoln never dreamed of being overwhelmed or oppressed by the consideration that he was poor. He showed what is still true in this Republic, that any man who has it in him, and who cares, can brush aside the obstacle of poverty and rise to the highest and best of which he is capable. *Minot J. Savage.*

The greatest name in the great world of Greece is Socrates; and Socrates was a poor man. The greatest name in the first century of the Christian era is Paul; and Paul was a working-man and sometimes in want. It was Calvinism, Mark Pattison said, that in the sixteenth century saved Europe, and Calvin's strength, a Pope once declared, lay in this, that money had no charm for him. John Wesley recreated modern England and left behind him "two silver teaspoons and the Methodist church." The "Poets' Corner" in Westminster Abbey, it has been said, commemorates a glorious company of paupers. *George Jackson.*

Perpendicular, not Horizontal, Classification. Christ knew no distinction amongst men and women, save the distinction of good and bad. We with our mammon worship divide society into horizontal strata, each stratum representing a certain amount of money income, much as Servius Tullius divided the "classes" of Rome, by the consideration of how much wealth they had. We put the millionaire at the top, and the pauper at the bottom. Christ would scorn such a vulgar, superficial division of manhood. The only division He ever made was a perpendicular division of good men on the right side of the line and bad men on the left. *F. W. Aveling.*

Earthly Things Perish. In his grand triumphal procession a king was asked by a smiling courtier, "What is wanting to make this perfect?" With a sigh he answered, "Continuance."

It is well to keep in mind three impressive inscriptions that are graven over the three doors of the great cathedral of Milan: "All that which pleases is but for a moment." "All that which troubles is but for a moment." "That only is important which is eternal."

Many monarchs have emphasized the thought, that however great and rich and lauded they have been in life, at death they can take no more with them than the humblest pauper.

Saladin the Great, who conquered Syria, Arabia, Persia, and Mesopotamia, had wealth untold, yet he held that riches were valueless. He

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left orders that the shirt or tunic which he wore at the time of his death, should be borne on the end of a spear at the head of his army, and that the soldier who thus carried it throughout the camp should often stop and proclaim: "Behold all that remains of the Emperor Saladin!—of all the states he had conquered; of all the provinces he had subdued; of the boundless treasures he had amassed; of the countless wealth he possessed; he retained, in dying, nothing but this shroud!"

It is said that Alexander the Great ordered that his hands should be extended outside of his coffin, that all might see that though he had conquered the world he left it with empty hands.

II. The Peril of Riches

The Lesson Christ Taught. One thing stands between that winsome youth and his service of the kingdom. It is his wealth. What can one who loves him propose but a heroic remedy? It is a case where alleviating treatment must fail, when the wise physician must with apparent cruelty counsel a capital operation. It is a situation familiar in modern life. A young man, well-born and well-bred, winsome and gallant, is withheld from the effective use of his life by the weight of his possessions. If he could only forget that he is rich, and give himself to strenuous work, he might do gallant service. If some dramatic summons like an actual war is heard by him, the follies of his luxury and self-indulgence drop away from him, and he becomes the most enduring and daring of soldiers. Meantime, however, here he is, with hardly a fair chance for a useful life, turning play into work, and sinking into a false and foolish estimate of life and happiness. What hope is there for such a young man except through some radical change, curative though cruel, like the surgeon's knife? *Professor Peabody, Jesus Christ and the Social Question.*

Abundance is Always a Handicap. In the simple matter of time, the handicap of abundance is constantly proven. Those who have a great amount of time at their disposal rarely accomplish much. The men who are doing most outside of their ordinary business are the men whose ordinary business is most taxing. The efficient lay workers in any church are the men and women who would seem to have least time for such service. That holiday to which you look forward, as giving you so much time to do certain things, rarely records the results that mark the days of greatest pressure. So it is with money, and health and every other possession of life. There seems to be a subtle, narcotic influence in abundance of possession. *Sunday School Times.*

Great Possessions. Sadly, indeed, must it be confessed that a considerable company pass out among us who are nothing apart from what they possess, things which they have collected around themselves, therein being well compared to the case-worm, which gathers about itself a coat of sticks and stones many times its size, then glues itself to the

bottom of the channel and feeds on spawn-fish. Tearing apart the outer coating of the larva we are surprised at its mass; shell after shell comes off—straw and stalks and roots—and when we reach the grub within, it is the tiniest insect. *Malcolm J. McLeod.*

The Idle Rich. When President Van Buren learned that his son had become engaged to a wealthy young woman, he is said to have remarked, "Well, poor boy, he is ruined; he will give up the study of the law, for which he has such talent, and become the least useful of human beings—a rich man."

Said the President of Brown University recently to his students: "We see a rapidly-growing leisure class in America, who are tempted to interpret life as a series of rights without duties, and pleasures without responsibilities. Supported by the results of their fathers' toil, they themselves bring nothing to pass. They live without thinking, swinging nothing heavier than a golf club, and by lives of luxury sow the seeds of social revolt. The man who has no wish to serve his fellows, but only to use them, has no moral right to be here."

Ye Can Not Serve God and Mammon. Emerson wittily said that the worst thing about money is that it so often costs so much. The message of Jesus in regard to riches is always that we must beware lest we pay too dear for it. What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?

III. The Blessing of Riches

Money is the Root of all Good. J. M. Barrie has well said that "Money may be always a beautiful thing: it is we who make it grimy."

No sentence is more frequently on the lips than Paul's words, "the love of money is the root of all evil." Nevertheless, that statement is a half-truth, for money is also a root of all good. Strictly speaking, money is neither good nor ill. It is a force, like water or wind or electricity, and in itself is therefore without moral quality.

Money is simply energy made portable; convertible manhood. It is as foolish to inveigh against fire because it burns careless people, or against steam because it scalds ignorant ones, as to inveigh against money because it is misused by bad men and avaricious. *Newell Dwight Hillis, in The Quest of Happiness.*

Two Noble Examples. Ruskin was born heir to nearly a million, and by his writings earned another fortune. Possessed of youth, wealth, and fame, he was courted by all the rich and great, but he gave himself and his means to the poor. He saw multitudes of men and women toiling in shops for eighty hours a week, and he decided to devote himself to their uplifting. To this purpose he gave a tenth of his fortune, then a third, a half, and finally all his means. He established clubs for them where various industries were taught, he gave spinning wheels and flax to the pauper women,

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he founded Sheffield Museum, where the finest models were kept for the benefit of workers in iron and steel, and in many ways he made his wealth a blessing to countless others.

This is his definition of true wealth: "There is no wealth but life—life, including all its powers of love, of joy, of admiration. That country is the richest which nourishes the greatest number of noble and happy human beings. That man is the richest who, having perfected the functions of his own life to the utmost, has also the widest influence, both personal and by means of his possessions, over the lives of others."

When the English government sought to reward General Gordon for his services in China, he declined all money and titles, but accepted a gold medal on which his name and a record of his thirty-three engagements were inscribed. After his death, the medal could not be found. At last it was learned that he had sent it to Manchester during a famine, with the request that it be melted to buy bread for the famished poor. In his diary that day he had written these words: "The last and only thing I had in this world that I value I have given over to the Lord Jesus Christ."

SENTENCE SERMONS

A great fortune is a great slavery. *Seneca.*

Charity is the salt of riches. *Jewish Proverb.*

Wealth unused and unspiritualized is dead. *Hillis.*

A young man is a mighty reservoir of unused power. *David Starr Jordan.*

There may be a very splendid manhood without any true religion. *Charles S. Robinson.*

Be thou as the sun in heaven, let thy gold be thy rays. *George Macdonald.*

When ballast is thrown out, the balloon shoots up. *Alexander Maclaren.*

The dross men toil for often stains the soul. *T. B. Aldrich.*

The wealth of a man consists in the number of things he loves and blesses, and in the number of things he is loved and blessed by. *Carlyle.*

Easy-going disciples are easily made—and lost: thorough-going ones are most surely won by calling for entire surrender. *Maclaren.*

When the rule of gold displaces the golden rule there is always loss. *A. C. Dixon.*

Men seek that they may have; Christ would have them seek that they may become. *S. Moxom.*

> Shame and woe to us if we our wealth obey,
> The horse does with the horseman run away. *Horace.*

Wealth is a trust, not to be used for one's personal pleasure alone, but for the welfare of others. *Helen Gould.*

A Christian making money fast is just a man in a cloud of dust; it will fill his eyes if he be not careful. *Spurgeon.*

Covetousness does not seem to be the temptation of those who have nothing, but rather of those who have something. *W. W. Sidey.*

One thing is certain, no man can possess ten millions—ten millions possess him. *Max O'Rell.*

A man may as well fill a chest with grace, or a vessel with virtue, as a heart with wealth. *Phillips Brooks.*

There is a working class—strong and happy among both rich and poor; there is an idle class—weak, wicked, and miserable—among both rich and poor. *Ruskin.*

The organization of wealth and culture for the service of poverty and ignorance is the first of Christian ethics, and the wealthy and cultured have more to gain from it in the deepening of their own sympathies than the poor and ignorant in the application of those sympathies. *W. J. Dawson.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart. 1 Sam. 16.7.

If riches increase, set not your heart upon them. Psa. 62.10.

And he said unto them Take heed, and beware of covetousness; for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. Luke 12.15.

If I have made gold my hope, or have said to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence; If I rejoiced because my wealth was great, and because mine hand had gotten much; This also was an iniquity to be punished by the judge, for I should have denied the God that is above. Job. 31.24, 25, 28.

Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy. 1 Tim. 6.17.

For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich. 2 Cor. 8.9.

Ah Lord God! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee. Jer. 32.17.

For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. Eph. 2.8.

Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. 1 Tim. 4.8.

To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life. Rom. 2.7.

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Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. John 5.24.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Now I saw in my dream, that at the further side of that plain was a little hill called Lucre, and in that hill a silver mine, which some of them that had formerly gone that way, because of the rarity of it, had turned aside to see; but going too near the brink of the pit, the ground being deceitful under them, broke, and they were slain; some also had been maimed there, and could not to their dying day be their own men again. *Pilgrim's Progress.*

THE LESSON SUMMARY

"This young man is both impulsive and reverent. First he runs to Jesus, and then he kneels before Him, and Jesus, looking on him, loves him. It is a beautiful meeting of fair, frank youth with a wise, calm Teacher. Yet the charm of youth does not soften in any degree the judgment of the Teacher. On the contrary, precisely because He loves him, Jesus demands of him a great renunciation."

His wealth was to him a stumbling-block. "Give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow me." The "great refusal" follows, for "he had great possessions." Can you not imagine with what loving pity Jesus turned to His disciples and said, "How hardly shall they that have riches—they that trust in riches—enter into the kingdom of God? It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle." Can you not imagine the bewilderment of the disciples as they ask, "Who then can be saved?" "With men it is impossible" to save themselves, Jesus affirms, "but," he adds, "not with God." Wealth tends towards selfishness; to enter the kingdom one must take up the cross and follow Christ. "It is easier to be a Christian in a peasant's hut than in Cæsar's household."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. How Jesus led men to think.

2. Positive and negative duties. The young ruler had kept the "thou shalt nots," he failed to keep the "thou shalts."

3. The teachings of the New Testament in regard to wealth.

4. The craving for more than ordinary "good works" shows a profound mistake in the estimate of the ordinary, and a fatal blunder as to the relation between "goodness" and "eternal life." . . . It is the same spirit in all ages that has led men who, with partial sight, longed after eternal life,

to seek it by fantastic and unusual roads of extraordinary sacrifices or services—the spirit which filled monasteries, and invented hair shirts, and fastings, and swinging with hook in your back at Hindoo festivals. *Alexander Maclaren.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. In which preceding lessons has the value of persevering prayer been taught? (Feb. 25, April 15, June 3, July 22, August 19.) 2. Tell the parable of the Two Sons, Matt. 21.28-32, and the parable of the Vineyard, 33-46. 3. Look up these references to other instances in the Bible where prompt obedience was shown. Gen. 22.3; Neh. 2.12; Matt. 4.22; John 11.29. 4. Read the conversation of Christ with Nicodemus. (John 3.1-17.) 5. What other publican did Jesus call? (Matt. 9.9-13.) 6. Read the call in Isaiah 55.6-13. 7. What does Paul say about salvation in Rom. 10.1-10?

BETWEEN LESSON IX AND LESSON X

The last verse of Lesson IX is illustrated by the parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard. The laborers who had worked all day complained because they received no more than those who toiled but one hour. The lord of the vineyard said to them, "I do thee no wrong. Didst thou not agree with me for a penny? Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?" So God is a righteous Judge who will award as He sees fit, and His judgment will not always be like man's.

On the way to Jerusalem Jesus told His disciples again plainly about His death and resurrection, but, as Luke adds, "they understood none of these things." Still intent upon their preconceived idea of a political kingdom, James and John came to Jesus with the request that they might sit the one on His right-hand and the other on His left in the kingdom. Jesus rebuked their worldly strife and false ambition, telling them that eminence in the kingdom is to be attained by service. (Matt. 20.1-28; Mark 10.32-45; Luke 18.31-34.)

BARTIMÆUS AND ZACCHÆUS

Luke 18.35-19.10. (Read Matt. 20.29-34; Mark 10.32-52.) Commit vv. 42, 43.

Golden Text

The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. Luke 19.10.

Time: March, A. D. 30.

Place: Near Jericho. In Jericho. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 84-86 and 95.

LESSON TEXT. LUKE 18.35-19.10

35 And it came to pass, that as he was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the way side begging:
36 And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant.
37 And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.
38 And he cried, saying, Jesus, *thou* son of David, have mercy on me.
39 And they which went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace: but he cried so much the more, *Thou* son of David, have mercy on me.
40 And Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto him: and when he was come near, he asked him,
41 Saying, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight.
42 And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee.
43 And immediately he received his sight, and followed him, glorifying God: and all the people, when they saw *it,* gave praise unto God.
1 And Jesus entered and passed through Jericho.
2 And, behold, *there was* a man named Zacchæus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich.
3 And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature.
4 And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycomore tree to see him: for he was to pass that *way.*
5 And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchæus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house.
6 And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.
7 And when they saw *it,* they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.
8 And Zacchæus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore *him* fourfold.

9 And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham.
10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

35. *As he drew near to Jericho.* Mark says, "as he went out of Jericho." Jesus left Jericho for Bethany on Friday noon, a week before the crucifixion. *A certain man.* Mark calls him Bartimæus.

36. *The multitude.* Many were already on their way to Jerusalem to keep the passover.

38. *Thou son of David.* A salutation acknowledging Jesus as Messiah.

39. *Rebuked him.* They were annoyed by his continual crying. *Hold his peace.* An old English phrase meaning *be silent.*

40. *And Jesus commanded him to be brought to him.* Mark tells how this caused a change in the attitude of the people. (Mark 10.49.)

42. *Thy faith hath saved thee.* The multitude had called Jesus "the Nazarene" and had tried to silence the blind man. He had called Him the "Son of David" and had persevered all the more. *Plummer.*

2. *Named Zacchæus.* A Hebrew name, showing that this publican was a Jew.

4. *Sycomore tree.* An Egyptian fig tree, somewhat like a mulberry tree. Its low spreading branches were easily climbed.

8. *The half of my goods I give to the poor.* That is, he now determines, vows to do so. His heart has been opened by Jesus' treatment of him, and this determination is a result of and proves the change wrought in him. *Baugher. If I have.* Whatever I have. *I restore him fourfold.* This was required by the Roman law, but the Jewish law required only a fifth more than the principal. (Num. 5.7.)

9. *A son of Abraham.* Both by descent and by having also the faith of Abraham. *Baugher.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

35. *As he was come nigh unto Jericho.* He begins to go up to Jericho with the vision of the cross standing out clear before His own soul, while the disciples dream of His kingship and their own coming authority. The pilgrimage that was now beginning was His last—a strange contrast to His first. Then He was a Boy, full of great wonder, of large questions, of dim foreshadowings of what was to be; now He is a Man, who has realized the ideal of humanity the ages behind had been straining after and ages before were to worship; a Man who had lived His high holy, lonely life, and is going forward to the death which is to finish the work His Father gave Him to do. *Fairbairn's Studies.*

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41. *Lord, that I may receive my sight.* Longfellow wrote his poem, *Blind Bartimæus,* in 1841, and in a letter about it to Mr. Ward said: "I was reading this morning, just after breakfast, the tenth chapter of Mark, in Greek, the last seven verses of which contain the story of blind Bartimæus, which always seemed to me remarkable for their beauty. At once the whole scene presented itself to my mind in living colors—the walls of Jericho, the cold wind through the gateway, the ragged, blind beggar, his shrill cry, the tumultuous crowd, the serene Christ, the miracle; and these things took the form I have given them above, where, perforce, I have retained the striking Greek expressions of entreaty, comfort, and healing; though I am well aware that Greek was not spoken at Jericho."

Blind Bartimæus at the gates
Of Jericho in darkness waits;
He hears the crowd; he hears a breath
Say, "It is Christ of Nazareth!"
He calls, in tones of agony,
Ἰησοῦ, ἐλέησόν με!

. . . . . .

Ye that have eyes, yet cannot see,
In darkness and in misery,
Recall those mighty Voices Three,
Ἰησοῦ, ἐλέησόν με!
Θάρσει ἔγειραι, ὕπαγε!
Ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέ σε!

5. *To-day I must abide in thy house.* The sympathy of Christ was not merely love of men in masses: He loved the masses, but He loved them because made up of individuals. He had compassion on the multitude. But He had also discriminating, special tenderness for every Peter and every Thomas. He felt for the despised, lonely Zacchæus in his sycomore-tree. He mixed His tears with the stifled sobs by the grave of Lazarus. Amongst the numbers as He walked, He detected the individual touch of faith. "Master, the multitude throng thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?" "Somebody hath touched me." *F. W. Robertson.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

35. *A certain blind man sat by the wayside begging.* There is an Arabic saying that "Begging is an easy trade, only the standing at the door is tiresome." The commonest form of infirmity is blindness. Some of those blind beggars, either led by children or guiding themselves by their long sticks, move about from door to door, but usually they are found at regular places in the town. The blind and lame are conducted or carried to the doors of churches at the time of service, especially on

fast-days, and line the steps at marriage and funeral ceremonies, they also congregate in front of chief houses on any occasion of family rejoicing or sorrow.

Year after year the beggar is borne daily to his place at a public corner in the town, or at the end of a bridge on its outskirts, and sitting on the ground under the rain or burning sun, with the dust flying over him in clouds from carriages and baggage animals, he recites the promises of God to those who care for the poor. Thus it was with Lazarus at the rich man's gate, and Bartimæus by the roadside at Jericho. *S. M. Mackie.*

Blind Beggars

2. *The chief among the publicans.* We find at the head the farmer-general, who was a Roman knight, and to whom was assigned the whole taxes of a province for a certain number of years, usually five. Under him were the *publicani majores,* the chief publicans, among whom was Zacchæus. They collected the taxes for the empire. Lastly, under their orders, came the *publicani minores,* the tax-gatherers properly so called. They examined the goods and collected the tolls on roads and bridges. *Edmond Stapfer.*

At the present time the Turkish government orders the publicans to collect a tenth, but permits them to demand a fifth. A farmer can not hide what he wishes to sell. His grain must be all taken to the public threshing floor, and there a huge stamp is placed upon it. The owner can not take it away until the tax-gatherer has been satisfied, and thus the latter often secures a fifth of the grain.

5. *To-day I must abide at thy house.* It does not appear that Zacchæus had previously seen our Saviour; but he would not be surprised when He said, "I must abide at thy house." Hospitality may almost be called a sacred rite in all parts of the East: and were it not so, what would become of travelers and pilgrims? In general, there are no places for public entertainment; for the rest-houses are seldom more than open places to shelter passengers from the sun and rain. View the stranger passing through a village: he sees a respectable house, and, having found out the master, he stands before him, and puts out his right hand, and exclaims, "A pilgrim." He is then requested to be seated; and is asked whence he came, and whither he is going. His temporal wants are supplied; and, when inclined to it, he pursues his journey. *Roberts, Oriental Illustrations.*

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THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. I remember to have read that, when Napoleon the Great was on his way to Russia, men, women, and children stood contentedly for days and nights, waiting to see him pass along his way; and a story is told of some clergyman in the far north of Scotland, who trudged on foot all the way to London in order to see the Duke of Wellington, and when he had seen him he quietly thanked God and trudged home again, counting himself well rewarded. We can understand, then, the eager excitement that filled Jericho at this time. Every place was crowded; everybody who could manage to get where there was a chance of seeing Him, waited for Him. Look forth upon the crowd, the scribes and Pharisees, the groups of Roman soldiers dreading an outbreak of this turbulent people, eager women lifting their little ones, rough men pushing others back for their own advantage—see how they throng the housetops, and how they cluster and crowd along the walls, while the narrow street is full of a surging host. *Mark Guy Pearse.*

For Older Pupils. Many events of great interest are associated with the name of Jericho. Here Joshua achieved his first signal victory in the conquest of Canaan. Close by, in its mountain fastnesses, the Sons of the Prophets sought retirement from the world. Over against this place, across the river, Elijah "went up by a whirlwind into heaven." Here Elisha with his cruise of salt healed the spring of waters. In its plains, Zedekiah with his host was overthrown and captured by the Chaldeans. Pompey led the Romans against it, and, battering down the forts which commanded its approach, he encamped within its lines, and took of its gathered treasures of silver and gold to swell his spoils of war. Here the cruel Herod made his home—or, if he did not reside here habitually, hither he came to die. Between this city and Jerusalem is located the imperishable story of the Good Samaritan. *Frederick A. Noble.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. Decision

Brought to a Choice. Last Sunday we studied a crisis in the life of a young ruler; to-day we have studied a crisis in the life of a publican. The young ruler stood as if stunned for one fateful moment and then turned away, grieved but unable to make the wise choice. His was the great refusal. The publican too, was stunned, for a moment, but with surprise that to him, the despised one, the message of salvation had come. Quickly he made the wise choice, he "received Him joyfully." His was the great acceptance.

Opportunities for Decision. When Bartimæus asked why there

was such a crowd of people on the road, they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by, and that roused him to exertion. What was true then, in a transient sense, is always true under the enjoyment of gospel privileges. Wherever Christ is preached we may make the announcement that the Saviour is passing by. The Bible is put into your hands to tell you Jesus is passing by. The Lord's Day dawns to repeat the glad announcement. The church bells ring out upon the sky to renew the declaration. The sanctuary with its simple service, the preacher with his gracious message, all declare the same thing to you. . . .

Remember that Jesus is *passing* by, and if you let slip this golden opportunity, you may never have another. Bartimæus felt that if he let that opportunity go, another might never come, and therefore he would not delay, and he would not be put down. So let it be with you. *Wm. M. Taylor, Miracles.*

Make Haste. Bartimæus might well have said that the crowd was so great and the complaints against him so loud that he would "hold his peace" and wait till another time. Perhaps the next time Jesus came that way he could have a quiet word with him. But Jesus never passed that way again.

"Make haste," said Jesus to Zacchæus, "for to-day I must abide at thy house." "This," says F. G. Noble, "is what Jesus is saying at this moment to those who are far advanced in life, and who have only a little time even at the most, to make their choice of God. 'Make haste'—this is what Jesus is saying to the young, while their feet are yet on the threshhold of life, and the floods of temptation have not yet overwhelmed them."

Decision Leads to Action. An evangelist uses a card on one side of which is printed, "What must I do to be saved?" and on the other side, "What must I do to be lost? Nothing."

"One thing was needful for the young ruler," says Doctor Edersheim, "that he should not only be Christ's disciple, but that in so doing, he should 'come and follow Christ.' Indeed, to many of us, some outward step is often not merely the means of, but absolutely needful for, spiritual decision. To some it is the first open profession of Christ; to others, the first act of self-denial, or the first distinct 'no'-saying; to some, it may be, it is the first prayer, or else the first act of self-consecration."

II. Conversion

The Lesson of Zacchæus. In this narrative we get a portraiture of a man in the attitude and act of entering into Christian life. Zacchæus, who had been a sinful man—a "chief among the publicans"—could not be other than corrupt, dishonest and thoroughly unprincipled. Two things set Zacchæus thinking: that this Stranger should know his name, that He should ask to go home with him whom all other men despised.

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By the side of Christ's, how his own life and character came up before him, revealed as by a flash of lightning! His entire moral nature was stirred. He came into the presence of Jesus presently with his mind fixed. He would make a total change in his life, and begin on the spot. "Lord," he exclaimed in new-found penitence, "the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold." That was the beginning of the publican's Christianity. That was his step across the threshold out of the old life into the new. Christ declared him now a Christian, "This day is salvation come to this house." He had become a scholar in Christ's school.

Zacchæus began his Christian life by striking at a sin, his besetting sin. His life had been a life of fraud. He stops defrauding and makes restitution.

Christ says, "Not they that say unto me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but they who do the will of my Father in heaven." Crying "Lord, Lord," is feeling. That and nothing with it is worthless. The Gospel doesn't tell us anything about Zacchæus' feeling, but about what he did. No doubt, as he grew in Christian experience, he saw a great many other sinful things in his character and life, and that as fast as he saw them he slaughtered them. *J. K. McLean.*

All Do Not Have Paul's Experience. Men read the life of Saul on the road to Damascus, and expect some mysterious light to shine on their pathway. They recall the career of Bunyan, with his days of anguish, his nights of tears and agony, and the sudden joy that struck over him like a flood. Many wait for some similar experience in their own career.

Among the mountains of the Adirondacks there is a beautiful lake called Placid, and on one side of the lake there is a high precipice with springs in the crevasses, and with mud all over the ledges. Last summer a little child, disobeying its parents, climbed up the side of the rocks, slipped over a boulder, fell upon a ledge covered with slime and spring water, and was carried to the hotel having suffered grievous injury. For days and weeks the child rehearsed the story of its fall, and its marvelous deliverance therefrom. But there was another little companion that kept within the appointed limits. Now, what if this second child, having listened to the deliverance that came to his companion, had longed for a similar marvelous experience, and often commented upon the fact that he had never been delivered from the peril of a heavy fall on the rocks, and that, since he had never fallen in the mire and had his garments washed, he very much doubted whether he had any right to be happy, or indeed whether or not he was alive and at Lake Placid at all? *N. D. Hillis.*

You Must be Born Again. These are the words of the Master to Nicodemus. Nicodemus wanted Christ to meet him in a lower world, a world of moral precepts and Hebrew traditions, where the Pharisee was thoroughly at home. But Christ said, "No, there is a higher world;

you must go up there; you must enter into that; you must have a new birth and live in a new life, in a life where God is loved and known and trusted and communed with. Not merely a better life of the old kind, but a new kind of life. Except you be born again, you can not see the kingdom of God, which is that new kind of life; and he who is least in that kingdom, he who has in any degree begun to live that higher kind of life, has something which the best and noblest soul in the inferior life has not, is greater than the greatest who is not in the kingdom. *Phillips Brooks.*

How to Become a Christian. Doctor Hillis compares conversion to the action of a traveler who has been going toward the north where perpetual winter reigns. When he perceives that he is going in the wrong direction he turns sharply upon his heel and goes toward the south. "But in this reversal of his direction there is nothing magical, nothing mysterious. Yet when he has turned toward the south we must not suppose that the traveler has reached that land of tropic fruits and flowers. Perhaps he has taken but one step toward a summer land that is a thousand miles away. Nevertheless, he has started for that glorious clime." This turning, or conversion (for this is what the word means), is only the beginning.

III. Restitution

The Christian and the Pagan Way. "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold," said Zacchæus. What better proof could he have afforded of the change in purpose that had come over him? He will make full restitution for his dishonest past.

A writer in the *Century* describes a pagan way of atoning for past misdeeds. Two men were measuring the circumference of Lhasa. "They threw themselves down the length of their whole bodies, resting on their hands, then drawing their legs to them, they stood up to prostrate themselves again immediately, this time placing their feet where their heads had last been. Think of the length of time, and above all, of the patience it requires to make thus the tour of the Holy City, a distance of about thirteen miles! Others, instead of measuring the way by the length of their persons, measure it by the width of their faces; they touch their foreheads to the ground, then, changing places laterally, they press their faces again at the spot next to the one they have just touched. It takes the pilgrim one month to make the tour of Lhasa in this fashion. It is a much longer method, but is not nearly so painful as the other."

The Conscience Fund. Large sums of money are annually sent to the "Conscience Fund" of the United States Government. People who have defrauded the government in any way are so troubled by their conscience that they return the amount anonymously, with or without interest.

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Far nobler is it to make restitution and acknowledge the wrong, as did a young college student in a letter to the President. He had taken a book from the library, he said, with no thought of stealing it, but it was after the hour for drawing books and he could not have it charged to his name. He kept the book for use for some time, and then found no way of returning it unseen. He was ashamed to acknowledge that he had taken it contrary to the rules, and decided to keep it. But when he was aroused by a religious awakening among the students to a decided Christian life, he no longer could let his falseness go unacknowledged. With the book he sent a considerable sum of money, the amount which would have been due in fines on the book.

No One Can be Pardoned and Retain the Offense. I once read a letter than which no sermon could be more solemn. It was from a stranger in America who was about eighty years of age. He wished to find out the heirs of a man whose partner in business he had been in Bristol more than fifty years before the letter was written. His partner had died, and he had cheated the heirs, so he said. He felt that he must soon die, and that he could not appear before the Judgment Throne till he had paid all these evil debts, principal and interest. He had plenty of money, he said, but every pound of it was a burden on his soul. He had carried with him for half a century that mysterious debt book which no man can get out of the way. *James Wells.*

The king in *Hamlet* kneels down to pray and cries,—

> O, what form of prayer
> Can serve my turn? "Forgive me my foul murther?"
> That cannot be; since I am still possessed
> Of those effects for which I did the murther,
> My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.
> May one be pardoned and retain the offence?

SENTENCE SERMONS

Conversion is the point whence we follow on to know the Lord. *George D. Herron.*

The strongest principle of growth lies in human choice. *George Eliot.*

Many persons come to the right point in conversion, but they never shove off. *Beecher.*

If you expect even to enter the kingdom of God, you must give up your ways and accept God's ways. *Moody.*

The greatest difficulty in conversion is to give the heart to God; the greatest difficulty after conversion is to keep the heart with God. *Flavel.*

> Ere God forgive the guilt,
> Make man some restitution. *Browning.*

To be a Christian is not only to think the thoughts and cherish the emotions that are Christian, but also and more emphatically to behave like a Christian. *Washington Gladden.*

He is a Christian who is loyal to Christ in thoughts, sympathies, friendships, purposes, and ideals. *Hillis.*

A Christian is just one who does what the Lord Jesus tells him: neither more nor less than that makes one a Christian. *George Macdonald.*

Once to every man and nation
Comes the moment to decide
In the strife of Truth with Falsehood
For the good or evil side. *Lowell.*

To some the way to Christ is up the Mount of Transfiguration, among the shining Beings of another world; to some it is across dark Kedron, down the deep Garden of Gethsemane with its agonies: what matters it, if it equally lead to Him, and equally bring the sense of need and experience of pardon to the seeker after the better, and the sense of need and experience of holiness to the seeker after pardon? *Edersheim.*

As some statues are cast in a mold and at an instant, others only little by little hewn and shaped and polished, as their several materials, metal or stone, demand the one process or the other, so are there "fusil apostles" like St. Paul, whom one and the same lightning flash from heaven at once melts and molds; and others, who by a more patient process, here a little and there a little, are shaped and polished into that perfect image, to which the Lord, the great Master-sculptor, will have them finally attain. *Archbishop Trench.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near. Isa. 55.6.

No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Matt. 6.24.

A double minded man is unstable in all his ways. Jas. 1.8.

The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts. Psa. 10.4.

And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. Jer. 29.13.

Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life. John 5.40.

Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, that seek him with the whole heart. Psa. 119.2.

Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law. Psa. 119.18.

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Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven. Matt. 18.3.

Repent ye therefore and be converted that your sins may be blotted out. Acts 3.19.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Every hour in life is a critical hour, and every hour when you stand hesitant midway between the past and the future is an hour big with destiny. There are moments in a campaign when everything depends upon a single decision of a general. And the greatest battle-field in history is the battle for the city of man's soul, and the moment has now come for men who have long stood hesitant, halting between two opinions, to decide. Oh, be wise! Desire, and also choose. In this hour dedicate the whole life to loyal obedience to the commands of Jesus Christ, and being wise for your own manhood in the life that now is, be wise also with that eternal life. *Newell Dwight Hillis.*

THE LESSON SUMMARY

"The Son of man has come to seek and to save that which is lost." These words of Jesus reveal the thoughts of His heart as He journeys towards Jerusalem there to offer Himself a willing sacrifice for the lost. Near Jericho He stops to save two wretched men, Bartimæus in his poverty and blindness, and Zacchæus in his wealth and loneliness. Bartimæus was worthy because he was in earnest and persevered in seeking Jesus despite the crowd and their complaints, so great was his faith in the Son of David. Zacchæus was worthy because he obeyed Jesus promptly, received Him joyfully, decided to lead a new life, and made what amends he could for his past life of extortionate greed. Truly Christ had said, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Spiritual blindness. There is no image under which the Scripture more commonly holds forth our natural condition than blindness. We read of our being "alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in us, because of the blindness of our hearts;" and we are told that "The God of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not." Paul prays for the Ephesians, "that the eyes of their understanding may be enlightened;" and David prays for himself, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." *William Jay.*

2. The world has hindered, frowned upon, clamored down, the man whose intellectual range was beyond the grasp of average dullness. The efforts of noble-hearted men to improve the condition of their fellow

men has been met with suspicion and assailed with misrepresentation. Even a Howard and a Wilberforce can not escape detraction; and society has shouted against those who have cried aloud in the cause of humanity, and has bidden them hold their peace. *W. Boyd Carpenter.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Where did Jesus spend the last week of His life? (Matt. 21.17; Mark 11.19; John 12.1.) 2. What proof is there that the public entry was intentional on the part of Christ? (Matt. 21 1-5; Luke 19.40.) 3. In Psalms 118.26 and Zech. 9.9 read the prophecies that were now fulfilled. 4. What two reasons does John give for the great multitude with Jesus? (12.12, 17, 18.) 5. Read about the raising of Lazarus in the 11th chapter of John. 6. What act of homage did the officers of the army of Israel perform when Jehu was proclaimed king? (2 Kings 9.13.) 7. Give Luke's account of Christ's weeping over Jerusalem upon the way. (19.41-44.) 8. Recall the instances in previous lessons where Jesus said, "It is written," or "Have ye not read." (Feb. 4, April 5, July 15.) 9. What effect did the cleansing of the temple have upon the scribes and chief priests? (Mark 11.18.) 10. This cleansing of the temple (vv.12-16) is generally considered the second in Christ's ministry. Read the account of the cleansing of the temple in John 2.13-17. 11. Which gospel gives the fullest account of the Perean Ministry? (Luke.) 12. Write an outline, or a brief narrative, of the events and discourses of this period.

BETWEEN LESSON X AND LESSON XI

The parable of the Pounds resembles closely that of the Talents given later, and the two are thought by some to be the same parable in different forms. In both parables faithfulness to a trust is rewarded, but in the parable of the Pounds the reward is proportionate to the ability, while in the parable of the Talents it is not. (Luke 19. 11-28.)

Jesus probably left Jericho on Friday, the eighth of Nisan, and reached Bethany the next day. At the close of the Sabbath, according to John, He was a guest at the house of Simon, where Mary, the sister of Lazarus, anointed Him. Matthew and Mark record this anointing later (in order to connect it with the treachery of Judas, it is thought), and as we are studying the Synoptists it is given later in the arrangement of our lessons. John, however, "nowhere, as far as can be determined, deviates from the chronological order." (Luke 19.11-28; Matt. 26.6-13; Mark 14.3-9; John 11.55-12.11.)

With the Triumphal Entry on Sunday our study of *Part VIII,* Passion Week, begins, from the final arrival in Jerusalem until the Resurrection.

JESUS ENTERS JERUSALEM IN TRIUMPH

Matt. 21.1-17. (Read Mark 11.1-11; Luke 19.29-44.) Commit vv. 9-11.

Golden Text

Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. Matt. 21.9.

Time: Sunday and Monday, April 2 and 3, A. D. 30.

Place: Road from Bethany to Jerusalem. The temple. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 87-89.

LESSON TEXT. MATT. 21.1-17

1 And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples,
2 Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose *them*, and bring *them* unto me.
3 And if any *man* say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them.
4 All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying,
5 Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.
6 And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them,
7 And brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set *him* thereon.
8 And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed *them* in the way.
9 And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.
10 And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this?
11 And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.
12 And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves,
13 And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.
14 And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple; and he healed them.
15 And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the son of David; they were sore displeased,

16 And said unto him. Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?

17 And he left them, and went out of the city into Bethany; and he lodged there.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *Bethphage.* The name means "House of Figs." Either a village near Bethany, or the name of the district extending from the base of the Mount of Olives to the walls of Jerusalem. Mark and Luke add, "and Bethany" (House of Dates).

2. *Loose.* Untie.

3. *Ought.* Anything.

4. *Spoken by the Prophet.* Spoken by Zechariah, 9.9, more than five hundred years before this. John says that the disciples had no thought at the time of the fulfilment of prophecy. John 12.14-16.

5. *Daughter of Sion.* Jerusalem, thus called from the chief hill on which it was built, a term often used in the prophetic writings.

7. *Put on them their clothes.* Instead of a saddle, the disciples, according to oriental custom, made use of their outer garments, or *abbas.* "Not knowing on which their Master meant to ride," say some commentators. "The language conforms to the Hebrew idiom," says Schaeffer, "which at times employs the plural number when the reader himself can understand that only one object is really meant. Compare Gen. 8.4."

8. *Spread their garments in the way.* See 2 Kings 9.13. *Branches from trees.* Palm branches, John 12.13, hence the term Palm Sunday. See Lev. 23.40. *Strawed,* R. V., *spread.*

9. *The multitudes that went before, and that followed.* John tells us that many people, excited by the news of the raising of Lazarus, hurried from Jerusalem to meet and do honor to Jesus, while following with Jesus was another multitude on its way to Jerusalem to keep the Passover. *Hosanna.* The Greek form of the Hebrew word translated in Psalms 118.25 "save now." "The grammatical construction, 'Hosanna to the son of David,' shows us that Hosanna had come to be a formula of congratulation or expression of good wishes, not unlike the English 'God Save the King.'" *Broadus. The son of David.* A recognition of Jesus as the Messiah. *Blessed is he that cometh.* A part of the great Passover hymn, or Hallel (Psalms 113-118), sung by the Jews on their great pilgrimages to Jerusalem.

10. *All the city was moved,* R. V., *stirred.* For the effect on the Pharisees see Luke 19.39, 40; John 12.19.

11. *Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth.* The multitude, which had saluted the Lord as the Messiah, appears to have been at once subdued and discouraged by the wondering ignorance (*Who is this?*), stupid amazement, and unbelief of the citizens. They now style the Lord simply "the

prophet," as if they somewhat contemptuously wished to say: "It is the well-known Galilean prophet." Their next cry was: "Crucify him, crucify him." *Schaeffer.*

12. *Jesus went into the temple.* On Monday, the day following the triumphal entry. (See Mark 11.11-17.)

13. *It is written.* The first clause following is from Isa. 56.7 and the second from Jer. 7.11. *A den of thieves,* R. V., *of robbers.* They were robbers whose extortionate demands were made openly: and they used the temple courts for their cattle, as the robbers used their caverns. *Farrar.*

15. *The children.* A masculine noun, probably the Levitic choir boys, who kept up the hosannas of the day before. *They were sore displeased,* R. V., *they were moved with indignation.*

16. *Have ye never read.* Psa. 8.2. *Sucklings.* The term applied to children up to the age of three years, but might be used metaphorically of those of tender age. *Williams. Perfected.* Established, constituted.

17. *Went to Bethany.* To the house of Martha and Mary, where He lodged through the Passion Week. (Luke 21.37.)

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

9. *Hosanna to the son of David.* As plainly as the crowning of a new monarch and the flourish of trumpets and the kissing of his hand by the great officers of state proclaim him king, so unmistakably does our Lord by riding into Jerusalem on an ass and by accepting the hosannas of the people proclaim Himself the King promised to men through the Jews, as the King of peace who was to win men to His rule by love and sway them by a Divine Spirit. *Marcus Dods.*

2. *The temple.* There were numerous synagogues throughout Palestine, more than four hundred in the city of Jerusalem itself, but there was only one temple for the whole Jewish race. This was the third temple built on the same spot, but to the minds of the Jews it seemed the very temple built by Solomon a thousand years before this, and it carried their thoughts back to the tabernacle of Moses' day.

The temple of Solomon was seven years in building; it stood on Mount Moriah nearly five hundred years (1005 B. C.-584 B. C.), and was then destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar. With the temple the ark was burned, and the Shechinah did not return to the second temple. A second temple, not nearly so magnificent, was built seventy years later by Zerubbabel. This temple was frequently desecrated. To gain the favor of the Jews, Herod the Great rebuilt it. This third temple was destroyed by the armies of Titus, who fulfilled the awful predictions of the prophets concerning the "desolation of Jerusalem." Upon the site the Mosque of Omar was erected, which is to-day as perfect as it was a thousand years ago.

Herod's temple was built under the direction of a thousand priests.

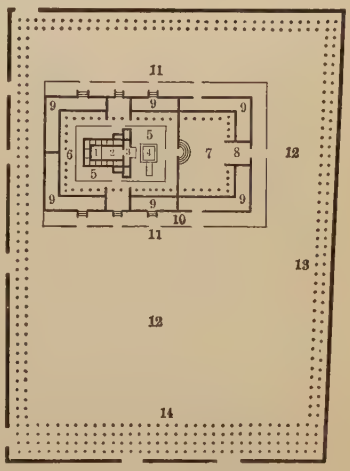
The temple was finished in 18 B. C., the other buildings not till 64 A. D.

The temple building itself was of white marble, "covered all over," as Josephus says, "with plates of gold of great weight, which at the first rising of the sun reflected back a very fiery splendor, and made those who forced themselves to look upon it, turn their eyes away, just as they would have done at the sun's rays."

Said the rabbis, "The world is like unto an eye. The ocean surrounding the world is the white of the eye; its black is the world itself; the pupil is Jerusalem; but the image within the pupil is the sanctuary."

The Mosque of Omar

The top of Mount Moriah had been leveled and then enlarged by building up walls from the Valley of the Kedron and filling in. The word temple was applied to the whole enclosure, which was nearly a thousand feet square. Terrace upon terrace rose the various courts—Court of the Gentiles, Court of the Women, Court of the Israelites, and Court of the Priests, and within the latter, in the north-western part of the entire area, rose the sanctuary itself.



Plan of Herod's Temple

(1) Holy of Holies (2) Holy Place (3) Temple Porch (4) Altar (5) Court of the Priests (6) Court of Israel (7) Court of the Women (8) Beautiful Gate (9) Priests' Chambers (10) The Chel (11) "Soreg" or Balustrade (12) Court of the Gentiles (13) Solomon's Porch (14) Royal Porch

The Court of the Gentiles. Within the high outer walls were the "porches" formed by magnificent granite columns, each made out of a single stone, which enclosed the Court of the Gentiles, so called because into this court Gentiles as well as Jews could go. According to tradition, this court was paved with the finest marble, and contained sleeping apartments for the Levites and a synagogue.

Two walls, about eighteen feet apart, formed a space called the *Chel,* which separated the Court of the Gentiles from the Court of the Women. In the first wall or balustrade there were gateways, and in front of these gateways were pillars. Inscriptions upon the pillars warned

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the Gentiles not to go farther on penalty of death. It was in this Court of the Gentiles that Jesus cast out all them that sold and bought, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves.

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

5. *Sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.* The oriental nations assigned a very high value to the ass, which is said to have been of a more stately and handsome appearance than the ignoble animal of the same kind found in countries farther north. It was not employed simply by poor people, but, like the mule, was preferred to horses for riding by men of the highest rank. The use of horses, which were preëminently employed for war purposes, was discountenanced among the Jews, doubtless with a view to discouraging the development of a military spirit among the chosen people. (Heb. 7.2; Gen. 14.18.)

Of the two animals mentioned, Jesus chose the colt, whereon yet never man sat (Luke 19.30), as the conception of purity or fitness for sacred uses was especially connected in the minds of ancient Jews and Gentiles with an animal that had not yet performed any labor. The ass was simply permitted to follow. *Schaeffer.*

8. *A very great multitude.* The annual pilgrimages to the temple were the greatest event of the year. In the villages and towns in the country the people would gather. The animals that were to be taken to be sacrificed had their horns gilded and were crowned with leaves or flowers, and the baskets containing the fruits that were to be offered were ornamented in the same way. When all was ready, a procession was formed and marched forward to the sound of music, and a psalm burst forth every now and then from the happy company. At every cross-road a tributary stream joined the main body. As their numbers increased, their religious fervor waxed, until it came to a climax when, on the distant view, there burst a sight of the battlements of Jerusalem and the pinnacles of the temple. When they came to the temple gates the priests came out to welcome them in the name of the Lord and receive their offerings. *James Stalker.*

12. *The tables of the money-changers.* The temple tribute had to be paid in exact half-shekels of the Sanctuary, or ordinary Galilean shekels. (Ex. 30.13.) When it is remembered that, besides strictly Palestinian silver and especially copper coin, Persian, Tyrian, Syrian, Egyptian, Grecian, and Roman money circulated in the country, it will be understood what work these money-changers must have had. . . . Many of the foreign Jews arriving at Jerusalem would take the opportunity of changing at these tables their foreign money. We can picture to ourselves the scene around the table of an eastern money-changer—the weighing of the coins, deductions for loss of weight, arguing, disputing, bargaining—and we can

realize the terrible truthfulness of our Lord's charge that they had made the Father's house a mart and place of traffic. *Edersheim, Life and Times of Jesus.*

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. We have come now to the last week of Christ's life on earth, to the time when He made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem on that day that ever since has been called Palm Sunday. Can you tell why it received this name? A picture of the way in which the people thought the Messiah would enter Jerusalem and proclaim Himself king, and another of the way in which He really entered, are given in *Ben Hur.*

"I saw your dreamy Cæsar make His entry into Jerusalem," said the Egyptian to Ben Hur. "You told us He would that day proclaim Himself King of the Jews from the steps of the temple. I beheld the procession descend the mountain bringing Him. I heard them singing. They were beautiful with palms in motion. I looked everywhere among them for a figure with a promise of royalty—a horseman in purple, a chariot with a driver in shining brass, a stately warrior behind an orbed shield, rivaling his spear in stature. I looked for his guard. It would have been pleasant to have seen a prince of Jerusalem and a cohort of the legions of Galilee. . . .

"Instead of Cæsar helmed and sworded, I saw a Man, riding an ass's colt, and in tears. I said to myself, 'Wait. In the temple He will glorify Himself as becomes a hero about to take possession of the world.' I saw Him enter the Gate of Shushan and the Court of the Women. I saw Him stop and stand before the Gate Beautiful. There were people with me on the porch and in the courts, and on the cloisters, and on the steps of the three sides of the temple there were other people—I will say a million people, all waiting breathlessly to hear His proclamation. The pillars were not more still than we. . . . The King of the World drew His gown about Him and walked away, and out by the farthest gate, nor opened His mouth to say a word." *Lew Wallace.*

For Older Pupils. History has never known another such an enthusiasm for a hero as the multitude once felt for Jesus Christ. The welcome Chicago gave to Grant on his return from his journey round the world; the enthusiasm excited by Kossuth when in 1851 he drove through Broadway, New York; the wave of gratitude that swept over the Italian multitude when Garibaldi appeared in Florence—all these are events that bear witness to society's devotion to its patriots and heroes. But, be it remembered, these scenes occurred but once in the history of each of these great men.

It stirs wonder in us, therefore, that Christ's every journey across the fields took an aspect of a triumphal procession, while His popularity

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waxed with familiarity and the increasing years. *Newell Dwight Hillis.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. Fickleness

The Fickle Multitude. The Duke of Wellington understood the fickleness of popular applause. Long after the conqueror of Napoleon had regained his popularity, and had become the most beloved subject of the Victorian Empire, he always kept the fence around his city home broken down, as an object lesson, to recall the time when the London mob battered it down to show their disgust at one of his official acts as Prime Minister. *Frank DeWitt Talmage.*

The Illustration in Julius Cæsar. No better example can be found in all literature of the way in which a mob may be turned from its purpose than Shakespeare has given in *Julius Cæsar.* You remember that after Brutus and the other conspirators had stabbed Cæsar, and Brutus had spoken to the mob, they all cried out, "Live, Brutus! live! live! Bring him with triumph home into his house. Give him a statue with his ancestors. Let him be Cæsar."

Then Antony began his clever speech.

"I am not here to disprove what Brutus spoke. But here I am to speak what I do know." And after he has spoken the mob is raised to the highest pitch of frenzy against Brutus. "O traitors, villains! Revenge! Let not a traitor live! We'll burn the house of Brutus," they cry, and start forth to execute their vengeance on the man whom a few moments before they would have crowned as Cæsar.

Wavering Christians. Near the equator there is a belt of variable winds, where a fine breeze blows for an hour or two and then there is a complete calm. Farther south steady trade-winds blow in the same direction all the year round. There are professing Christians whose Christian life resembles the variable winds, and there are others whose lives resemble the constant trade-winds.

II. The Might of Righteous Indignation

The Lesson Christ Gave. A friend of Lincoln said that he never saw him look positively handsome but once, and that was when he was righteously angry. Can one not picture Christ's countenance glorified by divine indignation as He went into the temple, and "cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves?" And what righteous scorn must have rung out in His words, "It is written, my house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves."

If all Christians were moved with righteous indignation against existing evils, what a reformation could be brought about! "Macaulay tells us," says P. E. Holp, "that 'a Pittite' came to mean a person who differed from Mr. Pitt on every subject of importance. The trouble with the world may be that 'a Christian' has come to mean one who differs from Christ on almost every subject of importance. Christ made much of covetousness, envy, pride, egotism, love of money; Christians make little or nothing of them. Christ taught the reality and power of righteous indignation; the Christian of to-day denies it. Christ spoke of sin as poison in the blood; Christians speak of it as a mere skin disease. Where Christ emphasized we must emphasize to-day."

Not Always Right to Suffer Wrong. It is not always your duty to resist wrong that is done to you. There are thousands of instances in which it is better to suffer wrong than to resent it. But there are many cases in which it is not a man's duty to suffer wrong. In all cases, where a man would, by his example, take out of the community a bold and manly spirit to resist injustice and wrong, and make men craven, he has no right to set that example. Where men seek to put wrong on you, and where their success will only make them stronger to oppress others that are weaker than you, you have no right to suffer wrong.

No man has a right to hide from God's battle, or to hold back his hand from the proper blow. The everlasting battle between right and wrong, between good and evil, between the spirit and the flesh, requires that every man should take sides, put on the whole armor of God, and stand in his place, and, if need be, fight to the end. *Henry Ward Beecher.*

A Commendable Spirit. A newspaper editor in a town in the state of New York recently exposed the corruption existing in the politics of the place. The politicians determined to ruin him, and induced many to withdraw their advertisements and stop their subscriptions. Then a priest of the Roman Catholic Church came to the aid of the editor. He announced in church that he would give half of his year's salary toward the editor's support, and that he would take special pains to patronize the merchants who advertised in the paper and admonished his people to do this also. "I do this in the name of fair play, of decency, and of a common manhood," the priest declared. "He is a Protestant and I am a priest of the Roman Catholic Church, but we are brother Americans, and I fight at his side."

III. Reverence for Sacred Places

The Beginning of Ruin is the Loss of Devoutness. I know in my own heart how soon the spirit of devoutness fades when, from any cause, I am deprived of public worship for any length of time. When I see a youth, to whom religious worship has been the atmosphere of his childhood, gradually withdrawing himself from the means of grace, I

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tremble for him, because I have seen what it means. I have seen the light of aspiration dying out of young eyes, as the sunshine dies from a cloud, leaving only gloom. I have watched character and all the finer part of a man deteriorate. I have known rich men whose spiritual decay has been in the ratio of their worldly success, and at this hour I can think of men whom I loved, who once came with me to the house of God to keep the holy day, and who now lie in the jail and in the penitentiary who are dying in a charity ward of a hospital, rotting, starving in the streets; and all their misery began when they "forsook the tabernacle of their God." *W. J. Dawson.*

You Go to Church to Worship God. Steadily and simply determine that you will worship Him, and you will not let such trifles distract you as often do distract people from this purpose.

What if a door does creak? What if a dog does bark near-by? What if the horses outside do neigh or stamp? You do not mean to confess that you, a child of God, are going to submit to dogs, or horses, or creaking doors!

If you will give yourself to the service with all your heart and soul, with all your might, as a boy does to his batting or to his catching at baseball; if, when the congregation is at prayer, you determine that you will not be hindered in your prayer; or, when the time comes for singing, that you will not be hindered from joining in the singing with voice or with heart—why, you can do so. I never heard of a good fielder in baseball losing because a dog barked, or a horse neighed, on the outside of the ball ground. *Edward Everett Hale.*

The Palace Beautiful. The finest name ever given, outside the Bible, to the church, is Bunyan's Palace Beautiful. Yet the churches which he was acquainted with were only the Baptist meeting-houses at Bedfordshire; and in an age of persecution these were certainly as humble structures as have ever served for places of worship. No better than barns they seem to common eyes; but in his eyes each of them was a Palace Beautiful; because, when seated on one of its rough benches, he felt himself in the general assembly and church of the Firstborn; and the eye of his imagination, looking up through the dingy rafters, could descry the gorgeous roof and shining pinnacles of the church universal.

It is a sanctified imagination that invests the church building, whether it be a brick meeting-house or a noble cathedral, with true sublimity; and love to God, whose house it is, can make the humblest material structure a home of the spirit. *James Stalker, Imago Christi.*

"Whosoever thou art that enterest
This church,
Remember it is the house of God:
Be reverent, be silent, be thoughtful;

And leave it not without a prayer
To God,
For thyself, for those who minister,
And those who worship here."

SENTENCE SERMONS

Let no one falter who thinks he is right. *Lincoln.*

A double mind is always a borrowed one. *Chicago Tribune.*

Men are respectable only as they respect. *Emerson.*

Travelers say that you may go into a Turkish mosque full of people and so intense is the stillness that, if you were to close your eyes, you might suppose yourself alone. *James Freeman Clarke.*

Worship is the act of a child associating with his Father; loving to be where He is; entering by all the ways that have become sacred and dear into His closest companionship. *Charles R. Brown.*

Petty, conceited, ill-mannered irreverence in demeanor in the Church of God is always a mark of a vulgar and a shallow nature; no noble nature yet was ever irreverent. *F. W. Farrar.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Then believed they his words; they sang his praise. They soon forgat his works; they waited not for his counsel. Psa. 106.12, 13.

Your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away. Hos. 6.4.

He that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. Jas. 1.6.

Thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God. 1 Tim. 3.15.

A double minded man is unstable in all his ways. Jas. 1.8.

Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the Lord. Lev. 19.30.

Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart. Psa. 32.11.

O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph. Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises. Psa. 47.1, 6.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

So the Lord comes to His temple now, so He looks round about upon all things; He notes the formal services, He notes the careless hearts.

"The Lord is in His holy temple," enter it with reverence. His house is a house of prayer; drive out worldly thoughts; hush your hearts into solemn attention. *B. C. Caffin.*

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THE LESSON SUMMARY

Two great streams of people met on that last Sabbath of Christ's earthly life. From the city of Jerusalem there poured a great multitude, aroused to a high pitch of curiosity and interest by the raising of Lazarus. Upon the Mount of Olives they cut long branches of palms, and moving onward with songs of praise they met the Son of David, and turning round, they spread their branches and garments in His way. Another great multitude, aroused by the healing of the blind man at Jericho, accompanied and followed Christ as He came out from Bethany. Vividly had the prophet Zechariah foretold this triumphal entry of Christ into Jerusalem as a King, "meek and sitting upon an ass," and vividly was the prediction fulfilled.

No wonder the whole city was "moved." "The Roman expected some public rising; the Pharisaical party was roused to new envy and malice; the Herodians dreaded a possible usurper; but the populace entertained for the moment the idea that their hope was now fulfilled, that the long-dreamed Messiah had at last appeared, and would lead them to victory."

After looking round about the temple, Jesus passed quietly out of Jerusalem and returned to Bethany to spend the night. Monday morning on His way to Jerusalem He pronounced His curse on the barren fig-tree, then entered the temple and drove out the traders. Must there not have been a wonderful power and authority in His indignant wrath to cause so many to retire before the moral force of One? And how this act must have increased the mortal hatred of the priests and scribes by whose authority the temple enclosure had become a "den of thieves!" Yet they dared not seize Him, for the multitude were still with Him. They could safely find fault with the children who innocently shouted forth the hosannas of yesterday, the homage to Jesus as Messiah, which was to Him "perfected praise."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. What were the characteristics and the results of the Perean Ministry?

2. "A place of worship becomes a den of robbers (a) when the worship is supported or the house of worship erected by such means as extortion or covert gambling in fairs; (b) when persons join a certain church in hope of gaining custom, or otherwise promoting their worldly interests; (c) when men wrong others through the week, and try to atone for it by worshiping God on the Lord's Day."

3. "Renan believed that Christ lived a perfect life and yet that He was an impostor, and he pleads that Christ should not be judged by our standards, 'petty conventionalities' of trusts. When the children sang 'Hosanna to the son of David,' and Christ accepted their praise, it is one of the

clearest of His claims to be in truth the Son of David as that term was understood, the Son of the Living God. He could not live a perfect life and claim to be divine and still be an impostor."

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. What does the word *hypocrisy* now mean? What is the history of the word? 2. In what lessons has Jesus taught broad principles rather than given minute rules? (April 8, July 1, July 8, July 15.) 3. What was Christ's decision in regard to the payment of tribute? (Verse 17.) What did the priests and scribes actually accuse Him of before Pilate? (Luke 23.2.) 4. How did the people afterwards hypocritically proclaim their loyalty to Cæsar? (John 19.12, 15.) 5. Read what Paul says about the resurrection in the fifteenth chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians.

BETWEEN LESSON XI AND LESSON XII

As Jesus and His disciples went up to Jerusalem on Tuesday morning, His disciples pointed out that the fig-tree He had cursed because it bore no fruit was already withered. The fig-tree was a fit figure of the Jewish nation. Whatever stands in the way of God's kingdom shall be removed.

On reaching the temple the members of the Sanhedrim asked Him by what authority He had cleansed the temple. Jesus in turn asked them a question that silenced them: "The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven or from man?" Had they recognized the prophetic authority of John, they would have recognized the Messianic authority of Jesus.

Three parables of warning followed. That of the Two Sons, the one who said he would work in the vineyard and went not, and the other who said he would not and went, taught that promises mean less than acts. In the parable of the Wicked Husbandmen the vineyard is the kingdom of God, the servants are the prophets, the son is Jesus, and the wicked husbandmen are the Jews. In rejecting the prophets and Jesus, the Jews had brought punishment on themselves. "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." The parable of the Marriage of the King's Son is somewhat similar to that of the Great Supper. The feast will be provided with guests if those first invited scorn the invitation. God's generosity can not be received contemptuously. (Matt. 21.18-22.14; Mark 11.20-12.12; Luke 20.1-19.)

JESUS SILENCES THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES

Mark 12.13-27. (Read Mark 11.12-12.12; Luke 20.20-40.) Commit v. 27.

Golden Text

Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's and unto God the things that are God's. Matt. 12.17.

Time: Tuesday, April 4, A. D. 30.
Place: The Temple. Geography Lesson, paragraph 86 and 90-94.

LESSON TEXT. MARK 12.13-27

13 And they send unto him certain of the Pharisees and of the Herodians, to catch him in *his* words.
14 And when they were come, they say unto him, Master, we know that thou art true, and carest for no man: for thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth: Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or not?
15 Shall we give, or shall we not give? But he, knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, Why tempt ye me? bring me a penny, that I may see *it*.
16 And they brought *it*. And he saith unto them, Whose *is* this image and superscription? And they said unto him, Cæsar's.
17 And Jesus answering said unto them, Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's. And they marvelled at him.
18 Then come unto him the Sadducees, which say there is no resurrection; and they asked him, saying,
19 Master, Moses wrote unto us, If a man's brother die, and leave *his* wife *behind him*, and leave no children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.
20 Now there were seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and dying left no seed.
21 And the second took her, and died, neither left he any seed: and the third likewise.
22 And the seven had her, and left no seed: last of all the woman died also.
23 In the resurrection therefore, when they shall rise, whose wife shall she be of them? for the seven had her to wife.
24 And Jesus answering said unto them, Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God?
25 For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels which are in heaven.
26 And as touching the dead, that they rise: have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, I *am* the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?

27 He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: ye therefore do greatly err.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

13. *To catch him in his words.* They wished to use against Him what He might say in answer to their questions.

14. *Thou art true and carest for no man.* The question they are to propose is a dangerous one to settle, but, they say with attempted flattery, they know He is not afraid of consequences. *Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar?* The tribute was the poll-tax. "This was a great debate ever since Pompey (63 B. C.) began to tax the Jews. The Pharisees, appealing to Ex. 30.13, held the view of the mass of the people, that in Israel, taxing was a divine prerogative, while the Herodians stood for the claim of the Romans. If Jesus decided for the Pharisees, the Herodians could accuse Him as a revolutionist and His fate might be that of Judas the Gaulonite (Acts 5.37); if He decided for the Herodians the people would reject Him. *Haas. Cæsar.* The name given to all Roman emperors, like *Kaiser,* the name given to all rulers of Germany. The reigning emperor was Tiberius.

15. *Tempt.* Try. *Bring me a penny.* Strict Jews would not carry a Roman denarion, for they regarded the image of the emperor thereon as idolatrous, but they could easily get one from the money-changers' table.

16. *Superscription.* The name beneath the image of Tiberius.

17. *Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's.* The Pharisees themselves had a maxim, that he whose coin is current is king of the land. It was a principle that the right of coinage involved the right of taxation. "The Jews, by using the coins, in so far were served by the Roman government. They therefore owed it some service in return. This service was the payment of taxes." *Shailer Matthews.*

17. *The things that are God's.* Give back to God that which is the image and superscription of God, the soul. *Erasmus.*

18. Compare Acts 23.8.

19. *Moses wrote unto us,* Deut. 25.5-10. The first child by the second marriage was looked on as belonging to the late husband, "that his name be not put out of Israel." The law was commonly called *levirate law,* from *levir,* a brother-in-law. The law on this subject is not peculiar to the Jews, but is found amongst various oriental nations, ancient and modern. *Lindsay.*

23. *Whose wife shall she be of them?* Can the same scripture teach this law, which expressly commanded such successive marriages as they had cited in their supposed example, and also teach the resurrection, which, they falsely assume, would make such human relationships simultaneous?

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24. *The power of God.* Seen in the return of the spring (Psa. 104.30), in the reviving of the corn (John 12.24), all earnests of the resurrection by the same power (Phil. 3.21). *Henry.*

26. *Have ye not read in the book of Moses,* in Ex. 3.6.

27. *God of the living.* The principle depends on the close relation between the life of God and the life of His children. The best illustration of the truth is the parable of the Vine. (John 15.1-8.) The connection between the living God and the patriarchs whose God He is, is as close as that between the vine and its branches. If the vine lives, its branches live. If God is living and immortal, the patriarchs are living and immortal. If the branches die, they cease to belong to the vine; if the patriarchs were dead they would have ceased to have any relation to God, or God to them. *Carr.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

17. *The things that are God's.* All the visible universe bears visibly stamped into its substance His image and superscription. The grandeur of mountain and stars, the fairness of violet and harebell, are alike revelations of the Creator. The heavens declare His glory; the firmament showeth His handiwork: the earth is full of His riches; all the discoveries which expand our mastery over nature and disease, over time and space, are proofs of His wisdom and goodness. Who laid the amazing plan which we grow wise by tracing out? Find a corner on which contrivance and benevolence have not stamped the royal image, and we may doubt whether that bleak spot owes Him tribute. But no desert is so blighted, no solitude so forlorn. *G. A. Chadwick.*

25. *They neither marry, nor are given in marriage.* The well-known words inscribed by his own wish, on the tomb of Charles Kingsley and his wife in Eversley Churchyard are: *"Amavimus, amamus, amabimus"* (We loved, we love, we shall love). None felt more strongly than he the impossibility of a deep and true love like theirs passing away, in a better life, into nothingness. There will indeed be no marrying or giving in marriage. Neither will there be any new ties of parent and child. But the divine Sonship of Christ consecrates through all eternity the relation of Father and Son, and is a pledge for ever that nothing that is holy and good shall ever fall to the ground. *Charles J. Abbey.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

Pharisees, Sadducees, and Herodians. The Sadducees were the party of the temple, and the Pharisees were the party of the synagogue.

Josephus estimates the Pharisees at six thousand, though I do not well know on what he bases his calculation. Perhaps the best way for you to think of them is as a body of laymen, respectable and influential, who

surrounded and supported the scribes; and I may add that in their turn they were surrounded by a much larger circle of people who sympathized and believed with them, as the Pharisees were very popular, and were looked up to by the country as a whole.

The Sadducees were a party much smaller in number, and the best way you can think about them is as a similar body of laymen surrounding and supporting the priests, very especially the high priests. You remember that for generations the high priests were virtually kings, and when they lost that position they still held high rank, and attached themselves closely to the home and foreign rulers of their country. The Sadducees were the aristocratic party, and were very powerfully represented in the Sanhedrim. The Pharisees were by far the most active opponents of Christ in the course of His life, but it was by the Sadducees that He was at last handed over to the Civil Law for crucifixion, and by them His followers were persecuted after His resurrection.

The word *Pharisee* means *Separatist*. . . . The Pharisees were the champions of the separateness and superiority of the Jews. . . . They gloried in the Old Testament prophecies which foretold the predominance of the Jewish race, and eagerly longed for their fulfilment. But the scribes, to whose teaching they looked up, told them that this would depend on the keeping of the law. The scribes said that it was the laxity in the keeping of the law which prevented the good time from coming, but if the law were kept properly, even for a single day, the Messiah would come. Accordingly, the Pharisees threw themselves with enthusiasm into the keeping of the law in all its parts.

The Sadducees were the party of protest. Their rule was not to do what the Pharisees did. For example, they held on by the Pentateuch as the only divine rule, because standing on this ground they were able to sweep away all the traditions of the Fathers and all the additions which the scribes had made to the law.

An extreme section of the Pharisees were Herodians—that is to say, courtiers, hangers-on of the Herodian rulers—just as an extreme section of the Pharisees were zealots; that is to say, men who were prepared to take arms and fight for the realization of the Messianic hopes which all Pharisees entertained.

The histories all say that in the year 76, after Jerusalem fell, the party of the Sadducees came to an end, and has never been heard of since, there being no longer a court or a high-priesthood to which it could cling. The party of the Pharisees, on the contrary, grew stronger and stronger, and in the first centuries after Christ, produced an extensive literature which is now known by the general name of the Talmud, and in which we have from their own hands the most abundant delineations of their character, their belief, and their practices. *James Stalker.*

14. *Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar?* There were two kinds of taxes, the "tribute" to the Romans, and the tax for the temple. Under

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the Herodians the royal revenue seems to have been derived from crown lands, from a property and income tax, from import and export duties, and from a duty on all that was publicly sold and bought, to which must be added a tax on houses in Jerusalem.

Heavily as these exactions must have weighed upon a comparatively poor and chiefly agricultural population, they refer only to civil taxation, not to religious dues. But, even so, we have not exhausted the list of contribution demanded of a Jew. For every town and community levied its own taxes for the maintenance of synagogue, elementary schools, public baths, the support of the poor, the maintenance of public roads, city walls, and gates, and other general requirements. *Edersheim, Sketches.*

15. *Bring me a penny.* In all other parts of the empire, religious homage to the emperor was jealously enforced, as a test of loyalty; but though great importance was attached to it, on this account, by each successive Cæsar, it was never attempted to be imposed on the Jews, except by the madman Caligula. It was reckoned enough that two lambs and an ox were offered twice a day, in the Temple, "for Cæsar and the Roman people"; whether at the cost of the emperor or of the sanctuary is uncertain. On extraordinary occasions, moreover, the Jewish authorities expressed their loyalty by great special sacrifices for the emperor. Next to the worship of the Cæsar, his effigy on the coins and military standards was abhorrent to the Jews, and, on this ground, care was taken not to offend their prejudices on these points. It was impossible, however, to avoid the circulation of Roman denarii in Judea bearing the imperial "image and superscription, for no gold or silver money was coined in Palestine. But on the locally coined copper money, only the name of Cæsar and innocent emblems were to be seen, as in the time of Herod. *Geikie, New Testament Hours.*

A Silver Penny, or Denarius of Tiberius
A Silver Shekel, a Judean Coin

The coin which Jesus had was not of the special coinage for Judea, in which palms, lilies, grapes, took the place of the picture of the emperor, which the Jews regarded as idolatrous; but it was a regular silver penny containing the beautiful head of the wicked Tiberius, encircled by a laurel wreath and bound with a sacred fillet. Underneath was his name (superscription). A penny was the ordinary pay for a day's labor. *John A. W. Haas.*

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. At a pea canning factory the pea-pods are run through a machine that separates pease and pods. Among the pods a large number of unopened ones are always found, "swell-heads," as they are popularly called, pea-pods that have nothing in them. These are thrown out with the empty pods, and boys often fill their pockets and caps with them thinking that they will have a generous meal.

There are many people just as deceitful as these "swell-heads." They are far different from what they claim to be. Over and over again Jesus sharply rebuked deceitfulness and hypocrisy. The first scene of our lesson to-day is an interview between Christ and the Pharisees, who had come to Him with deceitful words. They attempt to deceive Christ by words of flattery, and they pretend to desire an answer to a puzzling question, when their only purpose is to bring Jesus into trouble with the authorities.

For Older Pupils. About the time of the birth of Christ, a Galilean named Judas went about preaching the doctrine that Jehovah was the only ruler of the Jews and it was sinning against Him to pay tribute to a foreigner; the doctrine became very popular with a people steeped in hatred toward their conquerors. The tax levied by the Romans was always to the Jewish people a brand of slavery. They were the chosen people; freedom was theirs by right. "Shall we pay tribute to Cæsar or not?" was a question continually raised, and was equivalent to another question, "Shall we rise in rebellion?"

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. Hypocrisy

Hypocrisy a Fallen Word. Hypocrisy is a translation of the Greek word ὑροκρισιν, which meant at first merely *acting*. The hypocrite was one who acted a part on the stage in ancient Greece. Literally, it meant one who questioned and answered, hence one who impersonated a tragedian. Roscius, the greatest comic actor of Rome, praised his pupil Cicero by calling him a hypocrite. Since acting is usually for deceitful ends, the transition in meaning to *dissimulation* was easy. No one now is pleased at being called a hypocrite.

The Meaning of Sincerity. Sincerity is a word derived from two Latin words, *sine,* without, and *cera,* cement. When the ancient sculptors of Rome chanced to work on a piece of marble that had a flaw in it, or when their chisels missed their aim, they were wont to fill the chink with cement, and so cleverly did they do this that it was not perceptible at first. After a time, however, heat or dampness would reveal the deceit. Thus it came to pass that when a work of art was ordered,

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the purchaser added a clause to the contract that it was to be *sincera*, without cement. What a world of meaning in our word sincere!

Hypocrisy and Falsehood. Carlyle thinks that when we speak of falsehood we lay our finger on most of the world's worst maladies, and verily the sage of Craigenputtoch may not be so far astray, since what is sublimer than simple wholesome truth? What doth society need more for its ills to-day? Is it not patent that insincerity is one of life's harshest discords? In its last analysis hypocrisy is falsehood. It is the basest of all base metals, and the "Master of all good workmen," so accounted it. Very little had He to say concerning drunkenness and some of the coarser sins, but against all sham and cant and hollowness how He thundered! How severe His stricture! How terrible His rebuke!

"Who dares think one thing and another tell,
My soul doth loathe him as the gates of hell."

Malcolm J. McLeod.

Let Us Drop Pretense. In the clear light of eternity the false selves that we have wrought about us like a garment will shrivel and fall away. Whatever we really are, that let us be, in all fearlessness. Whatever we are not, that let us cease striving to seem to be. If we can rid ourselves of all untruths of word, manner, mode of life and thinking, we shall rid our lives of much rubbish, restlessness, and fear. Let us hide nothing, and we shall not be afraid of being found out. Let us put on nothing, and we shall never cringe. Let us assume nothing, and we shall not be mortified. *Anna Robertson Brown.*

II. Principles Versus Rules

Christ's Method. Just as in His treatment of the Sabbath question Jesus led the Jews to acknowledge, by their silence at least, the principle that works of mercy were lawful and necessary on the Sabbath, despite their countless rules against working on that day, so in regard to their question whether it were lawful to render tribute to Cæsar, He skilfully leads them to see the truth of His general principle of rendering unto each one his due. Here, as always, He goes beyond the special local question and gives a principle of conduct which is everywhere valid. Right conduct is more than the keeping of countless commandments. "In the Sermon on the Mount, as also in His parabolic teaching," says the *Temple Bible*, "Jesus laid down certain specimen principles of His method, *laws of the kingdom of heaven*, but never did He pretend to offer to men an ethical system in which they might expect to find all moral difficulties codified and ticketed with their appropriate fines and punishments. He knew that to do so would be to deny the laws of true life, to deny the deepest want of human nature, which needs effort and discipline, and

choice and failure, in order that it may grow and flourish. He laid down, therefore, broad principles of righteousness and truth, and love and helpfulness, and He left His followers to work out the details for themselves."

There is no definite line drawn across the continent of North America to separate the United States and Canada, but wherever the direction of the boundary line changes, posts are erected. Such landmarks of conduct Christ had given in the general principles He laid down for right conduct.

Rules are Good, but Principles are Better. Rules may contradict, confuse; principles are constant, consistent. To live by rule is too often to miss the nobler mastery, the mental and moral developing of principle. To live by principle is to be led to the best rules. When Jesus spoke of going two miles with the one who asked for one mile's companionship, of giving the extra cloak, of turning the other cheek, He was not laying down rules, but lifting up principles. Washing the disciples' feet, and bidding us do "as" He did, was not a rule, but a principle; otherwise, it could only be an oriental idiom, whereas now it is a universal idea. Given the idea, the idiom will follow. The greater involves the less. Principle is prophetic, genetic, dynamic. Love will take care of politeness, for it is its heart, and the heart vitalizes the hands; but rules of etiquette and deportment are no guarantee of love. *Sunday School Times.*

A Lesson from Arithmetic. Here is a school-boy with his arithmetic before him, and a whole page of "examples" to work out: and he takes each example by itself, and tries to think his way through it; trying all sorts of experiments, applying one method to one, and another to another, and getting more confused every minute. Presently the teacher looks over his shoulder at his slate covered with a chaotic mass of figures, and glances at the boy's hot and troubled face, and says to him, "You are taking a good deal of unnecessary trouble. This is not so hard as it looks: only one thing is needful; all these examples are illustrations of one law." And he sits down and explains a simple principle to the lad; and then the work becomes a delight. The boy has a clue in his hand which leads him straight through the whole labyrinth of figures. He turns from the multitude of details to the principle, and finds that the details arrange themselves, and the answer comes right every time. *Marvin R. Vincent.*

III. Render Unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's

Render to God the Things That are God's. Nebuchadnezzar ordered the three Hebrew children to fall down and worship the golden image, and because they would not, they were cast into the fiery furnace. They did well, for in the realm of conscience Nebuchadnezzar had no authority. Darius ordered the people to worship him, but Daniel refused and went on praying with the window open three times a day; Daniel did

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well, for, in the realm of conscience, King Darius had no authority. *J. D. Jones.*

Give to Everything Its Due. "Our lives are marred, disfigured, faulty, because we neglect this precept of our Lord. We are not giving to everything its due. We have rendered to Cæsar what belonged to God, and we have tried to put God off with what belonged to Cæsar. A certain proportion has not been observed. The beauty of a painting depends on a true perspective. The beauty of a building depends on the balance, the harmony, of the parts. The grace of the human form divine depends on a perfect proportion of limbs. It is even so in life. To make life beautiful, there must be a certain proportion observed, giving to everything its due.

"We give to the secondary, unimportant things the attention that only the supreme things of life can justly claim; and we dismiss what should be the supreme things of life with the scanty attention that belongs to the trivial.

"I remember reading a story in Merivale's *Roman Republic* that, in the last days of the Republic, when the city was threatened within and without, some of Rome's noblest sons, in her time of sore peril and need, spent the time in teaching the fish in the ponds to come to them when called. Now there is but little or nothing wrong in that, but we cry shame on the men that frittered their time in trifles like that when there was serious and solemn and strenuous work to be done.

"The most pathetic address in the whole of Shakespeare is one which the dramatist puts into the lips of Wolsey after his fall. You remember that great minister devoted himself to please his capricious master, Henry VIII, in order to advance his own prospects. When at last he saw all the plans of his life time laid in ruins about him, and all his efforts to please the king result in nothing, then he gave utterance to the bitter lament:

> "'O Cromwell, Cromwell!
> Had I but served my God with half the zeal
> I served my king, He would not in mine age
> Have left me naked to mine enemies.'"

Our Wants are not of Equal Importance. We must teach our wants to know and keep their places. They are not of equal rank; there are higher and lower, greater and less among them, and the education that they need is that which gives to each its true order and importance, which forbids the lesser to usurp the places that belong to the greater. To desire most strongly and most constantly that which is most precious and enduring; to shake from their hold upon our hearts the legions of trivialities and vanities—this is the beginning and the end of wisdom in the schooling of our wants. To want the best things most and the poorest things least—if this were our happy state of mind, how beautiful our

lives would be! And what are the best things? Plainly, they are the things that belong to character,—the things that pertain to ourselves, more than to our possessions and surroundings—the essential manhood and womanhood, and not its appendages of wealth or rank or decoration. The wants which lay hold on the qualities of character, that make us larger, better, truer men, these we may cultivate and stimulate all we will; there is no danger that these elements will be overdeveloped. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.

Think over the things that occupy your mind most constantly, and enlist most fully the strength of your wishes. Get the things that you are really hungering and thirsting for clearly before your thought; then put down the things that your conduct proves to be of secondary importance, and the things that you sometimes wish for but do not greatly dwell upon. Look them over and see whether the order needs revising; whether those things which are really the greatest in your estimation ought not to be the least, and those that are least ought not to be greatest. *Washington Gladden.*

Don't Waste Time on Trifles. A young art student was working under the direction of William Hunt. In the foreground of his landscape was a picturesque old barn. Mr. Hunt watched his pupil for a time and then exclaimed, "See here, if you spend so much time painting shingles on a barn, you will never have time to paint sunsets! You will have to choose." The choice between shingles and sunsets has to be made in every life, and what a large number choose the shingles!

SENTENCE SERMONS

God has given you one face, and you make yourselves another. *Shakespeare.*

An open foe may prove a curse,
But a pretended friend is worse. *Gay.*

The sincere alone can recognize sincerity. *Carlyle.*

He who pursues the stag regards not hares. *Chinese Proverb.*

Loyalty to rulers is with me an essential branch of religion. *John Wesley.*

It is not in the nature of wisdom to play into the hands of cunning. *Fairbairn.*

Hypocrisy is the only evil that walks invisible except to God alone. *Milton.*

Death is a change of relationship to men and the world, it does not change our relation to God. *H. B. Swete.*

Resolved, to know great things as great, and small things as small, and to act on that knowledge. *Jonathan Edwards.*

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The French have a very fine apple which they call *"le bon chretien,"* the Good Christian, because it never has the smallest touch of rottenness at the heart; it is fair without and sound within. *James Wells.*

Christ gave no decree doing away with one thing, retaining another, but he implanted the inward leaven which little by little would work through the dough, transforming it and making it a new material. *Edmond Stapfer.*

The hypocrite is not the lowest of men; below him is the man who is so lost to shame that he does not even want to conceal his unworthy practices. *Sunday School Times.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart. 1 Sam. 16.7.

Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. Acts 10.34, 35.

Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor. Rom. 13.7.

Knowest thou not this of old, since man was placed upon earth, That the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment? Job. 20.4, 5.

Their tongue is as an arrow shot out; it speaketh deceit: one speaketh peaceably to his neighbor with his mouth, but in heart he layeth his wait. Jer. 9.8.

Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Matt. 15.7, 8.

Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. Luke 12.1.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

The coin that bears Cæsar's likeness cannot be rightly withheld from Cæsar; the soul that is stamped with "the image and superscription" of God is misspent unless it is yielded to God. Every life not given up to Him is misdirected energy, and waste of our most precious possession,—ourselves. *Alexander Maclaren.*

THE LESSON SUMMARY

Pharisees and Herodians combine their efforts to entrap Jesus, and come to him with the crafty question, Is it lawful to give tribute to

Cæsar? They know, they say, that Jesus will give a true answer, whatever the consequences to Him, "for thou art true and carest for no man: but teachest the way of God in truth."

Jesus knew them of old, He was prepared to meet their hypocrisy as He had met it time and time before. They marveled at His skill in answering. "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's"—who could take exception to this advice?—"and," He adds, what you have not done, "render to God the things that are God's."

"The reply must have struck on the enemy's ear like the unexpected discharge of a gun. It pierced the heart of the matter, a grand triumph of intellectual adroitness and spiritual insight over worldly outsight and cunning." Not He had preached submission; they had avowed it by acknowledging that they traded as Roman subjects, used the coinage of Cæsar, and therefore should return some equivalent.

The Sadducees who sought to show the absurdity of the doctrine of the resurrection, by their supposed case of a woman who was successively the wife of seven brothers, Jesus answered by rebuking them for knowing neither the Scriptures nor the power of God. He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living; there will be life everlasting, but the life will be different from mortal life.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The answer of Christ in v. 17 settles in principle, though not in detail, the relations of church and state.

2. The Christian man will give cheerful obedience to the authorities, will obey the laws of the country, will pay his taxes as a religious duty, will cheerfully bear his part of the burden of the state, and will "render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's." Tolstoi's doctrine arose from a one-sided appreciation of the teaching of our Lord, who enforced the duty of obedience to rulers. *J. D. Jones.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Make a list of the instances in the lessons of the three quarters that show the power of Christ's word. 2. Come prepared to ask as well as answer review questions. 3. Write twelve important truths that you have learned from the twelve lessons.

REVIEW

Golden Text for the Quarter

And they were astonished at his doctrine, for his word was with power. Luke 4.32.

Autumn, A. D. 29.—April 4, A. D. 30.

His Words Effective. Martin Luther once wrote: "The words of the apostle Paul are not dead words; they are living creatures, they have hands and feet." Who can measure the power of the words Jesus Christ spoke, according to an estimate like this? For they were more than living creatures; He said Himself, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." *Charles S. Robinson.*

Charles Dickens was the great master of the pathetic style, yet when the novelist was asked what was the most touching story in literature, he answered, "The story of the Prodigal Son." Coleridge took all knowledge to be his province, and his conversation sparkled with jewels of thought. Yet, when asked for the richest passages in literature, he answered, "The Beatitudes." Edmund Kean was a great actor and artist, but there was one passage so full of tears that he thought no man could perfectly present it — the one beginning "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." *Newell Dwight Hillis.*

His Claims. He represented Himself, not only as the Messiah, but as indispensable to the race; He not only read the whole history of Israel as a preparation for Himself, but, looking forward, He claimed to inspire, to rule, and to judge all men for all time. A little bit of Syria was enough for His own ministry, but He sent His disciples into the whole world. Morality He identified with obedience to Himself. Men's acceptance by God He made dependent upon their acceptance of His claims and gifts. He announced the forgiveness of sins absolutely, yet connected it with His own death. He has given the world its highest idea of God, yet He made Himself one with God. He predicted His death, and that He should rise again; and to His disciples, not expecting this, He did appear again, and, in the power of their conviction that God had proved His words and given Him the victory over death, He sent them into the whole world—the whole world to which every port in Syria, on sea or desert, was at that time an open gateway. *George Adam Smith.*

His Miracles. Limited as Jesus was by His incarnation, how like a conqueror He worked! He was Master of all the forces of nature. The sea became to Him an unyielding pavement of adamant. When the storm arose He had but to say, "Peace!" and the huge green billows lay down at His feet like sleeping babes. Disease fled at His touch. The dead came forth at His call. And though He yielded to Death, He did it like a conqueror. "I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it up again." He died of His own free choice. And on the third morning He broke through the barriers of the tomb and came forth victor of the dark realm of Hades. *J. T. Parr.*

His Achievements. The achievements of the Saviour are of such kind and number that, if one should wish to enumerate them, he may be compared to men who gaze at the expanse of sea and wish to count its waves. For as one can not take in the whole of the waves with his eyes, for those that are coming on baffle the sense of him that attempts it, so for him that would take in all the achievements of Christ in the body, it is impossible to take in the whole, even by reckoning them up, as those which go beyond his thought are more than those he thinks he has taken in. *Athanasius.*

His Supremacy. An Emperor of China once decreed that there should be nothing before his time, that with him all history should begin. Who was he? Christ did not decree that history should be reckoned from His birth, but whoever writes a date thereby acknowledges the supremacy of Christ.

"His intellectual supremacy appears from the greatness of the thoughts and themes with which He enriched earth's loftiest spirits," says Newell Dwight Hillis. "Remembering that Christ had said, 'Take heed that ye despise not my little ones,' parents and teachers founded schools and colleges, and attained their fame as educators. From Christ's thought of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, Hampden and Cromwell borrowed their movement for liberty. The golden rule of Christ also lent Garrison and Phillips and their co-workers their love for black and white alike. Christ's words, 'Go ye into all the world,' sent Livingstone into Africa and Duff to found his colleges in India. Christ's identification of Himself with the poor and weak also sent John Ruskin and General Booth in the submerged districts.

"Though nearly three centuries have passed, Shakespeare has had but twelve great students of four nationalities who have given us great commentaries upon these immortal dramas. No young scholar has ever felt so interested in the Bard of Stratford that he has gone to some province of Africa in order to give his beloved poet to the people, or formulate their rude speech into written language. Yet during this century alone, the intellectual stimulus of Christ's story has been such that more than two hundred dictionaries, in as many dialects, have been compiled for the furtherance of Christ's thoughts and the enrichment of men's lives."

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Our Lord and Master of us all!
Whate'er our name or sign,
We own Thy sway, we hear Thy call,
We test our lives by Thine.

We faintly hear, we dimly see,
In differing phrase we pray:
But, dim or clear, we own in Thee
The Light, the Truth, the Way! *Whittier.*

LESSON OUTLINES

Title	Persons	Outline
1. Jesus and the Children.	Jesus, Disciples, A little child.	Who is greatest? Whosoever is humblest. Woe to stumbling-blocks. Wayward sought. Wandering sheep. Watchful shepherd.
2. The Duty of Forgiveness.	Jesus, Peter.	Until seven times. Unlimited forgiveness. Unmerciful servant. Universal law.
3. The Good Samaritan.	Jesus, A lawyer.	Good Master. Great commandment. Guilty priest. Grudging Levite. Good Samaritan. Go and do likewise.
4. Jesus Teaching How to Pray.	Jesus, Disciples.	Teach us to pray. The Lord's Prayer. Troublesome friend. They that ask receive. Tender Father.
5. Jesus Dines With a Pharisee.	Jesus, Pharisees, Man with Dropsy.	House of Pharisee. Healing the sick. Hallowing the Sabbath. Humility taught. Hospitality interpreted.

Title	Persons	Outline
6. False Excuses.	Jesus, Pharisees.	**F**alse assurance. alse excuses. avor extended avor lost.
7. The Parable of the Two Sons.	Jesus, Disciples.	**P**rodigal son. enitent son. erfect father. erverse brother.
8. The Judge, the Pharisee and the Publican.	Jesus, Disciples.	**S**elfish judge. elf-righteous Pharisee. elf-accusing Publican.
9. The Rich Young Ruler.	Jesus, Young Ruler, Disciples.	**R**ightful rules. eal sacrifice. egret and refusal. iches a handicap. eturn for self-denial. eversed conditions.
10. Bartimæus and Zacchæus.	Jesus, Multitude, Bartimæus, Zacchæus.	**B**lind Bartimæus. rought to Jesus. elief rewarded. enign Saviour. ountiful restitution. lessing given.
11. Jesus Enters Jerusalem in Triumph.	Jesus, Disciples, Multitude, Sellers and Moneychangers, Blind and lame, Chief Priests and Scribes, Children	**T**riumphal Entry. emple cleansed. ruest praise.
12. Jesus Silences Pharisees and Sadducees.	Jesus, Pharisees, Herodians, Sadducees.	**T**empting Jesus. ribute to Cæsar. ruth about the resurrection.

A REVIEW OF THE GEOGRAPHY OF PALESTINE

Paragraphs 54-94.

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A BRIEF REVIEW OF THE LESSONS

Lesson 1. The disciples come to Jesus with the question, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of God?" Seeing their great need of a lesson on humility, Jesus calls a little child, and tells them that unless they turn from their pride and jealousy and become as naturally humble as that little child, they shall not even enter the kingdom of Heaven. He warns them against becoming stumbling-blocks in the Christian life of the lowliest of His subjects, and in their own higher life. He has Himself come to save the lost. As a shepherd leaves the ninety and nine sheep that are safe, and seeks the one that has gone astray, so the Heavenly Father is not willing that one of these little ones should perish.

Lesson 2. "How oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Till seven times?" asks Peter. "Until seventy times seven," answers Christ. Then He illustrates the duty of forgiving others as God forgives us, by a parable. A certain king finds that a servant owes him ten thousand talents, but because of his entreaties, he forgives him. This servant, to whom much has been forgiven, refuses to forgive in his turn a fellow servant who owes him a trifling sum, and has him cast into prison. The king, very angry at the unmerciful servant, then punishes him for his injustice by casting him into prison.

Lesson 3. "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" questions a lawyer. "What is written in the law?" is Jesus' reply. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, and thy neighbor as thyself." "Thou hast answered rightly." "Who is my neighbor?" then asks the lawyer, evidently thinking that this question can not be so easily answered. The answer of Jesus is the parable of the Good Samaritan. A certain man going to Jericho is overcome by highwaymen and left half dead by the roadside. A priest passes by,—on the other side. A Levite passes by,—after coming and looking at him. A Samaritan looks and pities and helps. He binds up the man's wounds, puts him on his beast, and takes him to an inn. When he leaves he gives money to the host for the man's further care, and promises more if needed. To Jesus' question, "Which one was neighbor?" the lawyer answers, "He that showed mercy." "Go, and do likewise."

Lesson 4. The disciples ask Jesus after He has been praying to teach them to pray. In answer, Jesus gives them the form of prayer that we know as The Lord's Prayer, which prays first for the hallowing of God's name, the coming of His Kingdom, the doing of His will, and then for daily bread, forgiveness of sins, and deliverance from evil. "If a selfish neighbor will rise at midnight," Jesus further says to them, "and give bread to the one who asks it because he keeps on asking and will not let him sleep, much more will God answer prayer. If a father will not deceive a son by offering him a stone for bread, a serpent for a fish, or a scorpion for an egg, much more will our Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him.

Lesson 5. While Jesus is at the home of a Pharisee on the Sabbath, the Pharisees watch to see whether He will heal on that day a man who has the dropsy. Knowing their thoughts, Jesus asks them if it is lawful to heal on the Sabbath. They are silent. Jesus heals the sick man, and reminds the people that even they would pull their ox out of a pit into which it had fallen on the Sabbath. Meanwhile Jesus has been watching the guests as they strive for the best seats at the feast, and this sight leads Him to say that they should not take the highest seat, lest they have to give it up to a more distinguished guest, but should rather choose the lowest place, that they might be sought out by the giver of the feast and be told to come up higher. "For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." Then turning to the host, Jesus bids him not think that a feast given to his friends or kinsmen, who will give him a feast in return, is true hospitality. Rather should he give a feast to the poor and maimed, and thus do good to those who can not reward him.

Lesson 6. To this last remark of Jesus one of those present at the feast makes the general pious statement, "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God." Jesus, knowing that he feels sure of eternal life simply because he is a Jew, teaches him by means of the parable of the Great Supper that only those who accept the invitation will be accepted by Him in the great day of Judgment. A certain man, the parable says, gave a great supper and sent his servant to summon the guests, for all things were ready. All made excuses then; one wanted to see a field he had bought, another wanted to try some oxen, a third had married and could not come. The master of the house commanded his servant go out into the streets and lanes of the city and bring in the poor and afflicted, and yet there was room. He directed him then to go into the highways and hedges for those outside the city, that his house might be filled. By this parable Jesus taught that to the Jews first the invitation of the Gospels was given, and when they refused it was given to the Gentiles.

Lesson 7. After the parables of the lost sheep and the lost coin, Jesus gives the parable of the lost son. This prodigal, having obtained from his father his portion of the inheritance, leaves home and going to a far country spends all he has in riotous living. So famished is he that he is forced to take care of swine and eat the pods of the carob-tree to sustain life. He thinks of his father's house, where the servants are so much better off than he, and he resolves to return. He admits his sin against his father and against God, and he will ask only for a servant's place. His father has been mourning for him all this time, and when he sees him coming in the distance, he runs out to meet him, falls on his neck and kisses him. The son confesses his sin, and the forgiveness is complete. The best robes, shoes, and a ring, all showing that he is restored to his old place, are brought for him, and a feast is prepared to celebrate

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his return. Meanwhile the older brother comes back from the day's labor in the fields, and his jealous spirit is aroused when he learns from the servants what has happened. In his anger he refuses to join the others, and to his father's entreaties he complains that it is unjust to treat the sinning brother better than him who had not left home. "All that I have is thine," said the father, "but now it is meet that we should make merry over the return of the lost." Thus the Pharisees are rebuked. God's love has always been theirs, if they reject it it is their own fault; God's love extends also to all, both faithful and unfaithful.

Lesson 8. To teach the lesson of perseverance in prayer, Jesus tells the parable of the unjust judge. He would not listen at first to a widow who came to him for justice, but after a while he grew weary of her continual pleading, and to save himself further annoyance he granted her request. Shall not God, who is Justice, hear those who cry to Him, asks Jesus? Another parable Jesus gives to warn them against self-righteousness. A Pharisee stood and prayed, and his words were words of praise that he was not as other men, not as this publican, that he fasted twice a week and gave tithes of all he possessed. The prayer of this publican was, "God be merciful to me a sinner." The publican's prayer was heard, not the Pharisee's, said Jesus, for "he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

Lesson 9. Jesus is now upon His last journey to Jerusalem. A young man comes running, kneels down and asks, "What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" Thou knowest the commandments," answers Jesus. "All these I have kept from my youth." Jesus beholding him loves him and says, "One thing thou lackest: sell whatsoever thou hast and give it to the poor, and come, take up the cross, and follow me." So great a sacrifice the young man can not make, for he has great possessions. To the wondering disciples Jesus explains that to put one's trust in riches that perish is not the way to inherit eternal life. Only God can save men, men can not save themselves. Those that follow Him shall have their reward here and hereafter. But God judges not as man judges, and the surprise will be that "many that are first shall be last; and the last first."

Lesson 10. Jesus approaches Jericho surrounded by a great crowd who are on their way to the passover at Jerusalem. A blind beggar sitting by the wayside begging becomes aware that something unusual is happening and learns that Jesus is passing by. At once he cries to Him to have mercy upon him. The crowd would stop him, but he cries so much the more, till Jesus, hearing him, calls for him and restores his sight. No wonder that he and all the people with him glorify God. A little later, Jesus looking up sees Zacchæus in a tree overhead, where he has climbed because he is not tall enough to see Jesus as He passes. The rich but despised publican Jesus bids make haste and come down, for He will go with him to his house. Zacchæus receives Him joyfully, promises to

make amends for sins in the past, to give half of his goods to the poor, and to restore fourfold what he has taken falsely. "This day is salvation come to thy house," says Jesus, and then adds, "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Lesson 11. As Jesus comes to the Mount of Olives on His way to Jerusalem He sends two disciples to a village for an ass and a colt, bidding them say to the owner, "The Lord hath need of them." The disciples bring the animals. They put their garments upon the colt and Jesus rides upon it as prophecy has foretold, "Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and riding upon an ass." A great multitude is with Jesus, and another multitude comes out from Jerusalem to meet Him. They cut down palm branches and spread them and their garments in the way for Him to ride over, and they cry as they go, "Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." Upon reaching the city, the crowd there asks, "Who is this?" and the multitude answers, "The prophet of Nazareth." The day following Jesus enters the temple and drives out those that sell and buy there, and overthrows the tables of the money-changers, for He says, "It is written, My house shall be called a house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves." The Pharisees rebuke Him for allowing the children to cry in the temple, "Hosanna to the Son of David," but Jesus tells them that this is "perfected praise."

Lesson 12. The Pharisees are afraid as yet to lay hands on Jesus, because of the people. They unite with the Herodians, with whom they have been ever at enmity, in an attempt to induce Jesus to say something that will turn the authorities against Him. They ask Him if it is lawful to give tribute to Cæsar. If He answers Yes, He will offend the people, if He answers No, He will offend the Roman government. But Jesus calls for a penny and asks, "Whose name is upon it?" "Cæsar's." "Then," says Jesus, "render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's and to God the things that are God's." They marvel at His wisdom. The Sadducees, who do not believe in the resurrection, then come to Him with a question. Suppose, they say, that a woman has seven husbands one after the other, whose wife shall she be in the resurrection? There will be life after death, Jesus tells them, but that life will be different from this one, and there will be no marrying there.

A WORD PICTURE REVIEW

For Young Pupils. After picturing the scene of each lesson, let the pupils give its title and golden text. This may be made more difficult by describing the scenes out of their regular order.

Lesson 1. A man, surrounded by a group of men, is talking and pointing them to a little child near Him.

Lesson 2. A man has thrown himself down at the feet of another man, and is begging him to do something for him. In another picture this same

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man is holding a third man by the throat, and is about to drag him off.

Lesson 3. A man is lying by the roadside in a desolate region. Far in the distance can be seen two men hurrying on their way. Near by there is a patient ass standing, whose owner is bending over the man and pouring something on his wounds.

Lesson 4. It is midnight. A man is knocking at the door of a house, while within the house a man is sitting upon his bed and calling to the man outside.

Lesson 5. A group of men are reclining around a table and watching one who is looking at a sick man standing by the wall. In another scene a wedding is being held, and the master of the house and one of the guests are walking by all the other guests toward the best seat in the room.

Lesson 6. There is a great supper being given. Crowds of poor and lame and blind and sick are coming towards the house, while out beyond the city others are being led by a man who is talking earnestly to them and explaining where he is leading them.

Lesson 7. I see four pictures, one quickly following the other. First there is a ragged young man feeding a herd of swine. Next, this same young man in all his rags is clasped in the arms of an older man. In the third picture, this young man is resting within a fine house, and he is now dressed in fine garments. In the last picture I see the older man outside the house talking to another young man who looks cross and sullen.

Lesson 8. Here there are two pictures. In the first there is a poor woman standing before a man who is sitting comfortably upon cushions and is paying little heed to her, although she seems to be talking very earnestly. In the second picture a man is standing in a temple with uplifted hands and is talking loudly. Far away from him another man is standing in a humble attitude and striking his breast as he repeats the same words over and over.

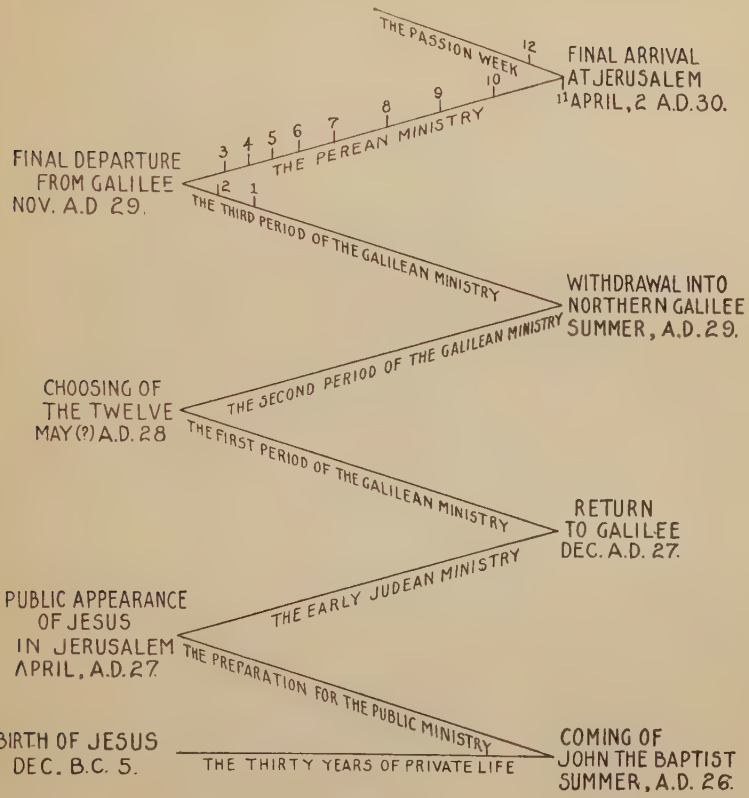
Lesson 9. A man is kneeling at the feet of another man; now he is walking slowly away and looking very sad; the other man remains talking earnestly with a group of men around him.

Lesson 10. Among a great crowd of people two figures attract our attention; a man who is blind is being led toward a man at whom all the people are looking. The same crowd is now walking along the street of a city; the one who is the object of interest to all is looking up into a tree and talking with a man who is up there among the branches.

Lesson 11. I see a man sitting upon a young colt in the midst of a vast crowd. The people in front are throwing their cloaks and branches of trees upon the road for him to ride upon, and all are singing and looking very happy. Again I see this man in a temple court; he looks very indignant and before him men are hurrying away with their doves and other animals, while near by tables are overturned in great confusion.

Lesson 12. There is a man holding a piece of money in his hand, and talking with a group of pompous-looking men before him.

A CHRONOLOGICAL REVIEW


THE PASSION WEEK
12
FINAL ARRIVAL AT JERUSALEM 11 APRIL, 2 A.D. 30.
10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
THE PEREAN MINISTRY
FINAL DEPARTURE FROM GALILEE NOV. A.D 29.
12
1
THE THIRD PERIOD OF THE GALILEAN MINISTRY
WITHDRAWAL INTO NORTHERN GALILEE SUMMER, A.D. 29.
THE SECOND PERIOD OF THE GALILEAN MINISTRY
CHOOSING OF THE TWELVE MAY (?) A.D. 28
THE FIRST PERIOD OF THE GALILEAN MINISTRY
RETURN TO GALILEE DEC. A.D. 27.
THE EARLY JUDEAN MINISTRY
PUBLIC APPEARANCE OF JESUS IN JERUSALEM APRIL, A.D. 27
THE PREPARATION FOR THE PUBLIC MINISTRY
BIRTH OF JESUS DEC. B.C. 5.
THE THIRTY YEARS OF PRIVATE LIFE
COMING OF JOHN THE BAPTIST SUMMER, A.D. 26.

To what period of Christ's life do the first two lessons of this quarter belong? What are the limits of this period? What are the limits of the Perean Ministry? Give in chronological order its chief events.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Who wrote the Epistle to the Galatians? 2. When was it written? 3. Where was Galatia? (A province in the interior of Asia Minor.) 4. Who went with Paul on his second missionary journey, when he first visited Galatia? (Silas and Timothy.) 5. What does the expression "bite and devour one another" mean? 6. For what purpose is the law? Why are those "led of the Spirit not under the law?" 7. Define longsuffering, faith, temperance. 8. What is the meaning of "God is not mocked?"

TEMPERANCE LESSON

Gal. 5.15-26; 6.7, 8. (Read Eph. 5.11-21.) Commit vv. 7, 8.

Golden Text

Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging. Pro. 20.1.

Time and Place: The Epistle to the Galatians was written by Paul at Corinth on his Third Missionary Journey, A. D. 55 or 58.

LESSON TEXT. GAL. 5.15-26; 6.7-8

15 But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.
16 *This* I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.
17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.
18 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.
19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these;* Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,
20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies.
21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told *you* in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.
22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,
23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.
24 And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.
25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.
26 Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.
7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.
8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

15. *If ye bite and devour one another.* In the preceding verse the law of love is given, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. In this verse,

Paul says that if the Galatians forget the law of love, and act toward one another like wild beasts, the church is in danger of being consumed by their quarrels.

16. *Walk in the Spirit.* Be led by the Holy Spirit of God. *The flesh* includes everything that is not "of the Spirit." It signifies the entire potency of sin. *Findlay.*

17. *The Spirit.* Throughout this passage the Spirit is evidently the Divine Spirit; for the human spirit in itself and unaided does not stand in direct antagonism to the flesh. *Lightfoot. Ye cannot do the things that ye would.* The Spirit strives to hinder your following the flesh when you desire to do so; and the flesh tries to hinder your following the Spirit when you wish to do that. *Stevens.*

18. *Not under the law.* Law exists for the purpose of restraint, but in the works of the Spirit there is nothing to restrain. *Lightfoot.*

19. *Manifest.* Plain, evident. Paul does not attempt to give a list of all sins, but mentions here those which were especially common among the Galatians.

21. *I have also told you in time past.* Upon his former visits. (1.9; 4.13.)

25. *If we live in the Spirit.* The inner life and the outer conduct should correspond. *Sterns.*

26. *Vain glory.* The opposite of humility. "Paul works round again to the subject of verse 15, and repeats his warning. It is plain that something had occurred which alarmed him on this point." *Lightfoot.*

7. *God is not mocked.* Can not be treated with contempt without provoking His righteous punishment. *Schaff.* This life is seed-time; the future life, harvest.

8. The soil of the flesh, that is, of corrupt human nature, yields blighted and rotten fruit; the soil of the Holy Spirit yields sweet and healthy fruit, even eternal happiness and peace. *Schaff.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

16. *Walk in the Spirit.* The commentators discuss the question: When Paul speaks of the Spirit, does he mean spirit in man, or does he mean the Holy Spirit of God? I am inclined to think, in a great many cases, he means both. A little child is sulky and cross, and the mother takes the child up into her lap, and talks with it, and reasons with it. By and by, the pouting lips begin to be drawn into a pleasanter expression, and the child brushes the tears from its eyes, and the frown is smoothed from the brow, and the little child jumps down and runs away, playing. Whose spirit is in the child—mother's or child's? Both. The mother's spirit is in the child's. The soldiers are fleeing away in panic, and Sheridan meets them, and halts them, and bids them turn the other way, and they gather up their thrown-down muskets and follow after him, and pluck victory

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out of defeat. Whose spirit makes this possible? Sheridan's? Yes. But Sheridan could not do it unless Sheridan's spirit was in the soldiers. They got his spirit, and it is his spirit in their spirit that wins the victory. *Lyman Abbott, in The Outlook.*

19. *Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these.* It may be pointed to as a proof of depravity that vocabularies have more words descriptive of forms of sin than words descriptive of forms of holiness. Under the fruit of the Spirit Paul gives a list of nine. But under the works of the flesh his list extends to fifteen, properly sixteen. And the word translated *which* implies that he did not profess to give an exhaustive list—it would have been easy for him to have added other instances. *R. Finlayson.*

22, 23. These verses contain the ideal character furnished by the gospel of Christ. *Love* is the throbbing, living heart of Christian goodness; *joy* is the beaming countenance, the elastic step, the singing voice of Christian goodness; *peace* is the calm unruffled brow, the poised and even temper which goodness wears; *longsuffering* is the patient magnanimity of Christian goodness, the broad shoulders on which it "beareth all things"; *kindness* is the thoughtful insight, the delicate tact, the gentle ministering hand of charity; *goodness* is the honest, generous face, the open hand of charity; *trustfulness* is the warm firm clasp of friendship, the generous and loyal homage which goodness ever pays to goodness; *meekness* is the content and quiet mien, the willing self-effacement that is the mark of Christlike goodness; *temperance* is the guarded step, the sober, measured walk, in which Christian goodness keeps the way of life, and makes straight paths for stumbling and straggling feet. *G. S. Findlay.*

Longsuffering. Not spasms, not intensity of passion and anger at one moment and good nature at another, not an alternation of incongruous emotions; but a steady, patient, on-going power to meet all circumstances, and to meet them with equanimity. After love, joy, and peace, comes longsuffering—the power of suffering long, either for others or for one's self—the power of suffering whatever one may be called to stand. *Henry Ward Beecher.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

21. *Envyings.* The rivalry of city against city was one of the most marked features of municipal life in Asia Minor. The great cities of a province wrangled for precedence, until even the Emperor had to be invoked to decide between their rival claims for the first place. They invented titles of honor for themselves so as to outshine their rivals, and appropriated the titles that their rivals had invented.

Even within the cities there was room for jealousy and strife. There was in Antioch and Lystra the great division between Roman or Latin citizens and the native dwellers: the burning subject of inequality of

rights was always close at hand. We may be sure that there were both Roman and non-Roman members of the church. *W. M. Ramsay.*

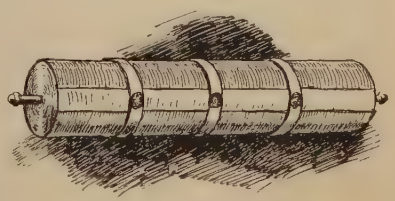
Drunkenness and revelings. The remains of the later Greek comedy, and the paintings on Greek vases, show how characteristic and universal such revels were in Greek cities. *W. M. Ramsay.*

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. When you receive a letter you often know by the handwriting who has written to you. If you do not recognize the writing, what do you look at next? If you can not make out the post-mark, or do not know any one in the place from which the letter is sent, perhaps you wonder a moment or two who the writer can be before you open your letter to find out. If you had read Paul's letters, you would recognize our lesson to-day as coming from him, for the words sound like his just as the words of most of your letters sound like yours. How many letters, or epistles as they are usually called, are there in the New Testament? How many of these did Paul write? What are these letters of Paul's sometimes called? (Pauline Epistles.) From which one of his epistles is our lesson taken?

For Older Pupils. Galatia or Gallo-Græcia was a mountainous but fertile province in the interior of Asia Minor. It had its name from the Gallic or Celtic tribes which inhabited it. Their ancestors, on invitation of Nicomedes, King of Bichynia, had come from the left banks of the Rhine and the Moselle, and, in company with a small band of Germans, settled in Asia about 280 B. C. They were the terror and scourge of Asia Minor, but after a hundred years of warlike independence they were forced to acknowledge the sovereignty of the Romans (B. C. 187), and their country was finally made a province of the empire under Augustus (B. C. 25).

The Galatians were the first of the Celtic and Germanic races to whom the gospel was preached. Saint Paul came first to Galatia during his second great missionary journey, about the year 51, accompanied by Silas and Timothy, and planted the seed of Christianity throughout the province. *Philip Schaff.*



An Ancient Epistle

Paul visited Galatia again on his third missionary journey (54 or 55 A. D.) Two or three years later he wrote this Epistle to the Galatians. In 1.7, "There be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ," Paul refers to those who sought to weaken his authority. In 4.18 he appeals to them not to lose their zeal because he is absent.

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LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. Variance, Emulations, Wrath, Strife

The Power of the Tongue. It is related that the heathen philosopher Xanthus ordered his servant Æsop to provide the best things he could obtain in the market for a coming guest. When the meal was served, each course consisted of tongue, though the sauce was different for each course.

Xanthus was very angry and exclaimed to his servant, "Did I not order you to buy the best victuals the market afforded?"

"And have I not obeyed your order?" returned Æsop. "Is there anything better than tongue? Is not the tongue the bond of civil society, the organ of truth and reason, and the instrument of our praise and adoration to God?"

For the morrow Xanthus ordered the worst things in the market to be provided. Æsop ordered tongues. "What! tongues again?" cried Xanthus. "Most certainly," replied Æsop; "the tongue is surely the worst thing in the world. It is the instrument of all strife and contention, the inventor of lawsuits, and the source of division and wars: it is the organ of error, of lies, of calumny, and of blasphemies."

Refined Cruelty. Many a man who would be ashamed to strike a brute beast with a bludgeon, has no shame in making a bludgeon of his tongue, to strike human beings in the tenderest places of their being—their social sensibilities and their self-esteem. Cruelty, in its gross and outward forms, we have in good measure suppressed; but the refined cruelty of the bitter word, the unloving censure, the abusive harangue, is not yet extinct. Let us be as careful of men's inner skin as of their outer. *Sunday School Times.*

A Greater Explosive than Dynamite. Human happiness and misery, we find, are largely a matter of what people are saying to each other. We are in an age of torpedoes and of eleven-inch guns, but the tongue still bears the palm for sheer destructiveness. Thucydides in the first book of history, makes it a mark of the high civilization of the Athenians that they had ceased to carry arms. We also, as a rule, go about unfurnished with revolvers or bowie-knives. Yet are we loaded, all of us, with murderous instruments. Our vocabulary is our arsenal of weapons. There are words in it more explosive than dynamite, and there is no recklessness comparable to that with which some of us fling about these combustibles. *G. Brierley.*

Guard well thy words—
How else canst thou be master of thyself?
Well-poised and courteous speech can make thee king
Among thy fellow men.
Keep watch upon thyself

And govern well thy lips as doors into a treasure house,
That nothing may be stolen from thee unawares
By sudden moods. *Mabel Percy Haskell.*

Blessed are the Peacemakers. One day a workman aboard a trolley-car noticed that every time the door was pushed open it squeaked. Rising from his seat he took a little can from his pocket, let fall a drop of anti-irritant on the offending spot and sat down again, quietly remarking: "I always carry an oil-can in my pocket, for there are so many squeaky things that a drop of oil will correct." Now the squeakiness that he dealt with is only a sort of parable of another species of the same kind of thing that proceeds from the contacts of one man with another. And just as I suppose that one object God had in making oil was to render it possible for two adjacent parts of a machine to rub together, without getting hot or stopping the machine, so He made love in all its modifying varieties as a contrivance to enable adjacent parts of the social or of the domestic machine to rub together without heat or stoppage.

But whether in one order of mechanism or in the other it requires only a very slight application to do the work. The oil-can need not be large, and one drop goes a great way. One of the first things that Christ said to the world was "Blessed are the peacemakers," and that was a benediction upon those who go around doing precisely the same thing between man and man, or between ourselves and others, that our trolley-car man was doing between the door and the rusty groove that it ran upon. *Charles H. Parkhurst.*

II. Wine is a Mocker, Strong Drink is Raging

Why Christ Said Nothing About Drunkenness. Palestine was in the days of Christ a country almost absolutely free from intemperance. It is not recorded that our Lord, attended as He constantly was with thronging myriads of followers, so much as once in His life had ever seen a drunken man. He laid down eternal principles, not special prohibitions. Will any one argue that betting and gambling are quite harmless because Christ never specifically forbade them? But Saint Paul, writing under other conditions, and amid a heathen population, laid down with perfect distinctness the principle on which so many of us are total abstainers, when he said, "It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor to do anything by which thy brother stumbleth and is made to offend." . . . The man of finest intellect whom the Middle Ages produced—Thomas Aquinas, the Anglican doctor—stated the principle of total abstainers with perfect lucidity. "The use of wine," he said, "is not in itself unlawful, but it may become unlawful either from the injury it inflicts on others, on the drinker, or as a temptation to excess, or when our liberty is a source of temptation to other, or is an impediment to perfection." *F. W. Farrar.*

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A Picture of the Effect of Strong Drink. Some of you have seen Couture's great picture, *The Decadence of the Romans*, in the gallery of the Luxembourg at Paris,—a picture of a luxurious hall where the frenzied orgy is at its height, a carnival of drunkenness and wantonness. A drunken youth, with a wreath in his hair, sits upon a pedestal; while a reeling boy proffers a goblet to the marble mouth of a statue. The old Roman dignity is gone from the brutalized faces of the revelers, which contrast sadly with the noble features of the statues of the old Roman worthies ranged round the hall, and with the sad faces of a group of thoughtful-looking men who are quitting the scene. And what is perhaps as significant as any other feature is, that the faces of this picture present a surprising likeness to the faces which one sees every day in Paris, and that the models for this wreck of human nature are furnished by the painter's own city. It is the story of the inevitable end of fast life and of fast society. *Marvin R. Vincent.*

Mark Hopkins on Temperance. Mark Hopkins was one of the most eminent and thoroughly successful teachers that this country has ever produced—so much so that President Garfield could suggest, as his idea of a college, Mark Hopkins at one end of a log and a student at the other end.

Every student who entered Williams College during my college life, whether for an advanced course or from another college, was obliged to subscribe to two pledges. The first, at the beginning of the second week after entrance, was as follows:

"I, A. B.——, promise on my faith and honor that, during the term time, and while residing at college, I will neither drink any intoxicating drink, nor have any agency in introducing it into college.

"If any student violates this pledge he will be dismissed from college."

The second pledge, called "The Matriculation," was subscribed to before the close of the first term, and not until then did the student become enrolled as a full member of the college. It read as follows:

"I, A. B.——, on condition of being admitted a member of Williams College, promise on my faith and honor to observe all the laws and regulations of this college, particularly that I will faithfully avoid the use of profane language, gaming, and all disorderly behavior."

Were these pledges kept? I never knew of one instance, during my four years, of any student's breaking either the pledge concerning drink or gaming; I only once heard the use of profane language, and in one single instance, where a student was found guilty of an impure life, he was dismissed from college at the end of his first term. *William D. Porter.*

What is Temperance? "Temperance" is the antithesis of "drunkenness and revellings," which closed the list of "works of the flesh," just as the preceding graces, from "peace" to "meekness," are opposed to the multiplied forms of "enmity and strife." Amongst ourselves very commonly the same limited contrast is implied. But to make "temperance"

signify only or chiefly the avoidance of strong drink, is miserably to narrow its significance. It covers the whole range of moral discipline, and concerns every sense of our nature. Temperance is a practised mastery of self. It is the control of the tongue, the hand and the foot, the eye, the temper, the tastes and affections. He is a temperate man, in the Apostle's meaning, who holds himself well in hand, who meets temptation as a disciplined army meets the shock of battle, by skill and alertness and tempered courage baffling the forces that outnumber it. *G. S. Findlay.*

III. The Fruit of the Spirit

Fruit is the Measure of Possibility. Now fruit, regarded in the light of the orchard, the garden, or the vineyard, is the most perfect form of development to which a tree or plant can come. Fruit is the thing for which all the enginery of roots and branches and leaves was appointed. It is the final result—the perfect thing. The tree can never go a step farther than its fruit. The fruit is the measure of its possibility.

So, when we speak of man as a tree, or a vine, and when we speak of the fruit of that tree, or vine, we refer to that divine summer which quickens man, and renders him productive, and brings forth in him the highest results of which he is capable. When a man comes to what is called the "fruit of the Spirit" in the New Testament, he reaches his full limit as a creature of time. It is the final result which is wrought out by all the influences for good which are brought to bear upon him. . . .

We have a whole summer before we reap our corn or our wheat. We have the bud, the blossom, and the long-growing apple, and then the late-sweetening apple. It takes all the light and heat of three months to prepare the apple to be plucked from the bough. And do you suppose that the higher fruits of the Spirit—love, joy, and peace—can all of them come at once, and by the act of conversion? The expectation with which people enter upon a Christian life, that they are at the start to have such a capital as will last them all the rest of their days, is a false expectation. *Henry Ward Beecher.*

Virtue is a Growth, Not a Manufacture. How can I make myself lovable, peaceful, joyous? You can not make yourself lovable, peaceful, joyous. Love, joy, peace, are not made; they grow. Love must be within a man before the work of love can show itself outside the man. Peace must be in his soul before it can speak from his lips as a benediction. In other words, we must be peace-ful—that is, full of peace; joyful, that is, full of joy. We can not make ourselves peaceful or joyful or lovable. These are the fruits of the Spirit.

. . . Growth requires cultivation. Where there is growth there has been a seed or a cutting. But there has been more than that. There have been weeds eradicated; there have been insects coming up to devour, and they have been driven away or killed; there has been a soil loosened

around the roots; there have been roots fed; there has been something done to make this a fruit worth having. "Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." We do not expect to grow in knowledge without cultivation. What have you done to cultivate love? Do you expect that it will grow of itself? Whatever will hinder this fruit culture must be avoided; whatever will help it must be accepted, taken, utilized.

These fruits of the spirit—fruits, that is, of man's own spirit, living and life-giving—are fruits of the Spirit of God dwelling in man. "Walk in the Spirit," says Paul to the Galatians, "and ye shall not fulfil the desires of the flesh." That is the secret. Walk with God, and then God's life will fill your life with His Spirit. *Lyman Abbott, in The Outlook.*

The Husbandman Waiteth for the Fruit. First Peter was an acquaintance of Jesus Christ; then his acquaintanceship ripened into friendship, his friendship into discipleship, discipleship into apostleship. Peter came to his great spiritual experience along the line of a gradual progression. The great law of gradual progress works in the distinctly spiritual realm. First we are caught by the word, then by the work, and gradually by the personality, until our souls come to make the great confession which is born from our own personal experience, "Thou art the Christ." Jesus Christ is always willing to wait for the maturing of the impression of His own word. First the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. James knew that truth when he said, "The husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit . . . and has long patience for it." *Nehemiah Boynton.*

There Must be Growth. Never forget, it was merely of the body, not of the intellectual or spiritual man, the declaration was made that you can not by taking thought add one cubit to your stature. When a tree ceases to grow, your science teaches you that it should be harvested. When the sun ceases to rise, its shadows fall mournfully eastward and the day is surely drawing to its close. When you cease to grow, you have already begun to decay. Grow, then, while you live—grow to your full height. *Whitelaw Reid.*

"Very early," said Margaret Fuller, "I perceived that the object of life is to grow." She herself was a remarkable instance of the power of the human being to go forward and upward. Of her it might be said, as Goethe said of Schiller: "If I did not see him for a fortnight, I was astonished to find what progress he had made in the interim." *James Freeman Clarke.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

It is the return blow makes the quarrel. *J. A. Macdonald.*

Drink is Death's Prime Minister. *Addison.*

People dread cholera, but brandy is a far worse plague. *Balzac.*

Thou shalt not drink wine or anything that may intoxicate. *Buddhist Commandment.*

Far from me be the gift of Bacchus—pernicious, inflaming wine, that weakens both body and mind. *Homer.*

Every moderate drinker could abandon the intoxicating cup, if he would; every inebriate would, if he could. *John B. Gough.*

A very little woman with a sharp tongue can kill a man six feet high. *Japanese Saying.*

A man has no more right to say an uncivil thing than to act one, no more right to say a rude thing to another than to knock him down. *Johnson.*

Love of vainglory is a very common vice all the world over, in all conditions: in the smallest village there are some peasants who deem themselves wiser and better than the rest, and like to be looked up to. *Martin Luther.*

We are all full of dogs: temper is a snarly cur; destructiveness is a bulldog; combativeness is a hound, that runs, and barks, and bites. *Henry Ward Beecher.*

Christ's conception of right living in this world is to increase the sum and force of spiritual manhood. *Henry Ward Beecher.*

The heart "sows unto the Spirit" whenever in thought or deed His prompting is obeyed and His will made the law of life. *G. S. Findlay.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

The law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient. 1 Tim. 1.9.

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. Rom. 8.2.

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. Rom. 8.14.

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? 1 Cor. 3.16.

Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? There is more hope of a fool than of him. Prov. 26.12.

If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Rom. 12.18.

Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem the other better than themselves. Phil. 2.3.

Even as I have seen, they that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same. Job 4.8.

Be not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate. Titus 1.7-8.

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Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Phil. 4.8.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Last year the British government sold thirty-one obsolete warships for junk, and ordered them to be broken up at once. Three of them were new sixteen years ago, but now they are useless. Sixteen years from now, those of you who have just started upon your Christian life will be valueless as disciples of Christ unless you keep on growing.

THE LESSON SUMMARY

"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," Paul says in his letter to the Galatians, and then, remembering that the Galatians were prone to quarrel, he adds, "But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another." He exhorts them to be led by the Spirit. The Spirit of God and their own tendency to sin are ever at variance. He enumerates some evils which he knew the Galatians indulged in, emphasizing especially licentiousness, drunkenness, and quarrelsomeness. These he offsets by the "fruit of the spirit—love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. If the state does not soon control the liquor traffic, the liquor traffic will soon control the state. *Lord Roseberry.*

2. As for the religious remedies for intemperance, as for education, as for the appeal to individuals, I have no mind to speak, but I will only say it reminds me of the passage in *Pilgrim's Progress.* "Then Christian called to Demas, 'Is not the place dangerous? hath it not injured many in their pilgrimage?' 'Not very dangerous,' said Demas, 'except to those that are careless.' Withal he blushed." And he might well blush when he spoke. *F. W. Farrar.*

3. We are not living in this world for its honor, nor for its pleasure, nor for its wealth, nor for its power, although we have a right to some of all of these; but by industry, by frugality, by labor, by education, by all the forces which belong to human nature, we are in this life to develop a higher and spiritual manhood. *Henry Ward Beecher.*

4. "If I thought that there was a stain on the remotest hem of the

garment of my country," said a great American leader—Daniel Webster—"I would use my utmost labor to wipe it off." Here, in this ruin of souls by drink, is no mere travel-stain upon the hem of a garment, but a garment dyed in blood.

In one year drink sacrifices more children in Christian England than were ever borne to Moloch in the East. The cries of the children in England are unheard and unnoticed from very commonness, and nothing breaks our immoral callosity of indifference in a matter in which we ought to feel ready to sink into the very earth for shame. We protected the factory children by legislation; we protect dumb animals; we will not allow a horse or a dog or a cat to be misused. We interfered by Parliament on behalf of the birds of the air and the fishes of the sea; but the young children, oh, they are weeping bitterly, and are less worthy protection than salmon and sea-gulls! *F. W. Farrar.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. By what two questions did the enemies of Jesus seek to gain answers that could be used against Him? (Lesson for Sept. 16.) Was the question of the scribe in the next lesson asked for the same purpose? 2. What did Jesus say in Matt. 22.40 that depended upon the two commandments given in the next lesson? 3. In what other lesson were these commandments given? (July 15.) 4. What previous lesson taught the duty of loving our neighbor? (July 15.) Tell the parable. 5. What words of King Agrippa to Paul remind one of Christ's comment in verse 34? (Acts 26.28.) What was Paul's answer? (Acts 26.29.) 6. Read the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians. 7. What lesson about humility did Jesus give because of the Jews' love of the uppermost rooms at feasts mentioned in verse 39? (July 29.) 8. What lesson told about the injustice of judges, mentioned in verse 40? (Aug. 19.) 9. What lesson told about long prayers made for a pretense, verse 40? (July 22.)

BETWEEN LESSON XII, THIRD QUARTER, AND LESSON I, FOURTH QUARTER

The question of the lawyer about the Great Commandment immediately follows the question of the Sadducees about the Resurrection.

FOURTH QUARTER

LESSON I—OCTOBER 7

THE TWO GREAT COMMANDMENTS

Mark 12.28-34 and 38-44. (Read Matt. 22.34-23.39.) Commit vv. 30, 31.

Golden Text

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart. Mark. 12.30.

Time: Tuesday, April 4, A. D. 30.
Place: The Temple. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 87, and 95-98.

LESSON TEXT. MARK 12.28–34 and 38–44

28 And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all?

29 And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments *is,* Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord.

30 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this *is* the first commandment.

31 And the second *is* like, *namely* this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

32 And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he:

33 And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love *his* neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.

34 And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him *any question.*

38 And he said unto them in his doctrine, Beware of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and *love* salutations in the marketplaces,

39 And the chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at feasts:

40 Which devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: these shall receive greater damnation.

41 And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much.

42 And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing.

43 And he called *unto him* his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I

say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury:

44 For all *they* did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, *even* all her living.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

28. *One of the scribes.* This scribe may have been pleased at Christ's defeat of the Sadducees (the lesson for Sept. 16), and may have been himself an earnest inquirer.

31. *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.* Man ought to love his neighbor, (1) not as he does love himself, but as he ought to love himself; (2) not in the same degree, but after the same manner, i. e., freely and readily, sincerely and unfeignedly, tenderly and compassionately, constantly and perseveringly. *Burkitt. There is none other commandment greater than these.* The unity of the moral law prevents any discrimination between its precepts. It is one law of love. No one can love God without loving his fellow men, and no one can truly love men without loving God. The former is the source of the latter. Hence the first table (the first five commandments) enjoins love to God, and the second (the last five commandments) love to our neighbor. *Riddle.*

32. *Well.* The Greek word καλῶς means beautifully, excellently, and gives the idea of complete satisfaction with the reply.

34. *Discreetly.* Understandingly. His wisdom is shown, not only in accepting Christ's judgment, but in admitting that moral obligations are more important than forms of worship, "burnt offerings and sacrifices."

35-37. The omitted verses contain Christ's "unanswerable question." "How say the scribes," questions Jesus, "that Christ is the Son of David," that is, a political ruler, as they interpret this phrase. Then Jesus quotes from Psalm 110, and thereby says that David's words make the Christ greater than his son. The Messiah is more than a Jewish king.

38 and 39. A condensation of the woes recorded in Matthew 35. *Long clothing.* Their robes of office; long flowing robes with long fringes. *Marketplaces.* The chief places of resort. *Chief seats in the synagogues.* Special seats in front of the ark were kept for the elders. *Uppermost rooms,* R. V., *chief places.*

40. *Shall receive greater damnation,* They were doubly guilty because they did evil under the guise of piety.

41. *Jesus sat over against the treasury.* Jesus had left the Court of the Gentiles where He had been teaching, and had entered the Court of the Women. Here was the treasury.

42. *Two mites.* A mite was the smallest copper coin in use. Its value was about two-fifths of a cent, or about one-fortieth of a laborer's wage for a day. Two mites was the smallest amount that could be given, for it was not lawful to give only one mite.

44. He gives most who denies himself in giving.

Fourth Quarter Lesson I October 7

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

41. *Jesus sat over against the treasury.* The Court of the Women was raised about eighteen feet above the Court of the Gentiles, and was large enough for more than fifteen thousand worshipers. It received its name from the fact that, while it was for all Israelites, the women were not allowed to go beyond this court. Under the colonnades surrounding the court was the treasury, the thirteen brazen "trumpets"—money chests with trumpet-shaped mouths for receiving the contributions of the Jews. Upon each an inscription stated for what purposes the money would be used, for sacrifices, incense, fuel, etc.

42. *A poor widow threw in two mites.* If we have regard to the origin of the expression, it argues more of presumption than of humility, to call any gift, as many do, however liberal, unless it were our all, a mite, while the frequent use of the term to excuse some shabby offering which costs the donor nothing is a remarkable example of the serene unconsciousness with which persons will sometimes pass the most bitter sarcasms upon themselves. *Davies.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

28. *Which is the first commandment of all?* The Jews divided the Pentateuch into six hundred and thirteen precepts, three hundred and sixty-five prohibitions—as many as there were days in the year—and two hundred and twenty-eight commandments, as many as there were parts in the body. They distinguished between greater and lesser, and had many disputes about the greatest. Among the greater commandments they reckoned Sabbath observance, circumcision, rules of sacrifice and offering, and rules about fringes and phylacteries. *G. S. Lindsay.*

Manner of Wearing the Phylactery

29. *The first of all commandments.* Christ quotes Deut. 6.4 which, called *Shema* from its initial word, was the beginning of the morning and evening prayer of every Israelite, stood at the head of the Jewish division of the commandments, was contained in the phylactery, and was found in the Mezzuzah, the little box with extracts of the law, which was nailed to the doorposts. Its very use shows its fundamental character. *John A. W. Haas.*

38. *The scribes love to go in long clothing.* Their robes were a contrast to the simple tunic and cloak which Christ and His disciples wore. The distinctive articles of religious dress worn by the devotees among the Pharisees were two—the *Tephillin* (phylacteries) and the *Çiççith* (fringes).

Mohammedans wear passages of the Koran, engraved upon plates of metal, and the Jews of Palestine still have phylacteries bound upon their arms and foreheads. The *Çiççith* were blue fringes, placed at the four corners of the robe, or mantle, as commanded in the Law (Num. 26.37, 38). The Pharisees wore broad phylacteries and very long fringes. *Edmond Stapfer.*

A Phylactery
A Mantle with Fringes

40. *Which devour widows' houses.* People often left their whole fortune to the temple, and a good deal of the temple money went, in the end, to the scribes and Pharisees. The scribes were universally employed in making wills and conveyances of property. They may have abused their influence with widows. *Marvin R. Vincent.*

40. *For a pretence make long prayers.* In their seven classes of Pharisees, Talmudic writers place Shechemites, Pharisees from self-interest; stumblers, so mock modest that they will not raise their feet from the ground; bleeders, so mock modest that because they will not raise their eyes, they run against walls, etc. Thus the Jewish writers themselves depict the Pharisees as the Tartufes of antiquity. *F. W. Farrar.*

41. *Many that were rich cast in much.* Yes, very much, for such was the tendency that a law had to be enacted, forbidding the gift to the temple of more than a certain proportion of one's possessions. And the amount of such contributions may be inferred by recalling the circumstances, that, at the time of Pompey and Crassus, the temple treasury, after having lavishly defrayed every possible expenditure, contained in money nearly half a million, and precious vessels to the value of two million sterling. *Alfred Edersheim.*

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Review the lesson of the Good Samaritan (July 15). Show how the lesson of loving our neighbor as ourselves was heeded or disregarded in the succeeding lessons. In the lesson for July 22, the selfish neighbor gets up and gives the bread asked for, not from love to his neighbor, but from love of his own comfort. In the lesson for July 29, Jesus rebukes the guests for their lack of neighborly love, for their choosing the chief places at the feast. In the lesson for August 12, the Elder Brother has no vestige of love in his heart, filled as it is with jealousy. The lesson for August 19 shows an unjust judge and a hypocritical Pharisee whose deeds and words reveal contempt of others. The rich young ruler of August 26 falls short of loving his

Fourth Quarter Lesson I October 7

neighbor as himself—he can not make a sacrifice for the poor at Christ's command. The money-changers in the temple (lesson for Sept. 9), and those who permitted them to be there, were influenced by greed of gain, not love of neighbors. The hearts of the Pharisees and Sadducees who came to try Jesus (lesson for Sept. 16) were filled with hatred toward Him, and love of their neighbors had never had a place in their thoughts.

For Older Pupils. Some one has said that we have a moving panorama of living characters, who come in contact with Jesus Christ, propose their questions, receive their answers, and pass along, giving place to others; but their questions and answers do not pass away with them; they remain for ever, the record of spiritual truths in living form. How did Jesus settle the question of the Pharisees with reference to politics? The question of the Sadducees with reference to the resurrection? What question did a Pharisee ask? Was this Pharisee hostile to Christ and seeking to embarrass Him by his question, or was he an earnest seeker after the truth?

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. Thou Shalt Love the Lord Thy God with All Thy Heart

And with All Thy Mind. Think of the patriot's love for his land. Is it complete until the great ideas which lie at the basis of the country's life have appealed to the patriot's intellect, and his mind has enthusiastically recognized their truth and majesty? Is your greatest friend contented with your love before you have come to him with all your mind? Will any fondness for his person, or association with his habits, or gratitude for his kindness, make up for the absence of intellectual sympathy, for a failure of your understanding to grasp the truths by which he lives? Everywhere we find our assurances that the mind has its affections and enthusiasms, that the intellect is no cold-hearted monster, which only thinks and judges, but one that glows with love, not merely perceiving, but delighting to perceive, the beauty of the things with which it has to do. *Phillips Brooks.*

How Am I to Learn to Love God? I want to do my duty, but I do not feel as if I loved God. Our Lord gives the answer, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Act for God; do and say the things that He wills; direct your thoughts and intentions Godward; and depend upon it, in the slow process of nature all that belongs to you—your intelligence, your affections, your feelings—will gradually follow along the line of your action. Act for God; you are already showing love to Him, and you will learn to feel it. *Charles Gore.*

The Test of Love. In *A Legend of Service,* Doctor Henry van Dyke answers the question as to how one may best show his love to God. An angel stands before the Lord, and thus speaks:

"Lord, in the city Lupon I have found
Three servants of Thy holy name, renowned
Above their fellows. One is very wise,
With thoughts that ever range above the skies;
And one is gifted with golden speech
That makes men glad to hear when he will teach;
And one, with no rare gift or grace endued,
Has won the people's love by doing good.
With three such saints Lupon is trebly blest;
But, Lord, I fain would know, which loves Thee best?"

For answer, the Lord of Angels proposes a test.

"Thou shalt go to Lupon, to the three
Who serve me there, and take this word from me:
Tell each of them his Master bids him go
Alone to Spiran's huts, across the snow;
There he shall find a certain task for Me:
But what, I do not tell to them nor thee.
Give thou the message, make My word the test,
And crown for Me the one who answers best."

At the pulpit steps the angel meets Benol, the great preacher, and gives his message.

Then Benol's hidden face
Went white as death, and for about the space
Of ten slow heart-beats there was no reply;
Till Benol looked around and whispered, "Why?"

With a sigh the angel passed on to the home of Malvin, the saintly sage, and gave him the same message.

With sorrow and surprise
Malvin looked up, reluctance in his eyes.
The broken thought, the strangeness of the call,
The perilous passage of the mountain-wall,
The solitary journey, and the length
Of ways unknown, too great for his frail strength,
Appalled him. With a doubtful brow
He scanned the doubtful task, and muttered "How?"

With fading hope the angel hastened on till he met Fermor, "hurrying cheerful down the street," and gave to him the Lord's command.

Ere Asmiel breathed again
The eager answer leaped to meet him, "When?"
The angel's face with inward joy grew bright,

And all his figure glowed with heavenly light;
He took the golden circlet from his brow
And gave the crown to Fermor, answering, "Now!
For thou hast met the Master's bidden test,
And I have found the man who loves Him best.
Not thine, or mine, to question or reply
When He commands us, asking how or why:
He knows the cause; His ways are wise and just,
Who serves the King must serve with perfect trust."

II. Thou Shalt Love Thy Neighbor as Thyself

Thou Lovest Thyself Well. In spite of many faults, you still love yourself. You never speak evil of yourself, or hold yourself up to scorn, though you often could do so with splendid effect. Again, God loves you, and you should love what God loves, but God loves your upper self, not your under self; your true self, and not that false self which is made up of evil passions. You are to love yourself in that God-like fashion, and then love your neighbor as yourself. *James Wells.*

How Christ Loved. Love was the principle of Christ's life. Some men are like Western farmers who have their hundred and sixty acres, and put one hundred and fifty-nine and one-half acres in hay and grain and grass for the cattle, and half an acre around the door is a garden and grass plot, and a fraction of that the wife cultivates in flowers. So men give the larger part of their lives to self or justice or righteousness or fair-dealing, and they cultivate a little plot with flowers which they call love. Now, love was not thus a mere accident of Christ's life. It was the essence of His life. He lived for love. Love was the inspiration of His life. *Lyman Abbott, Signs of Promise.*

This Hath Love Done. Who is this spare man with the stern, severe face, who is searching the arches of London with a lantern? Who is this same man going up and down the factories and the coal mines? Who is this same man standing in the House of Commons, with his voice almost choked with emotion after an hour's prayer, pleading for the white slaves of England? It is Lord Shaftesbury. And when we ask, what was it that bore him on, that carried his frail form through all his work, that bent down before him the most cruel and the most selfish opposition, there is only one answer. It was love. The true love that searches for the downtrodden and the degraded, which cares for the ugly and the uninteresting and the very poor. It was true love that bore him on, and thousands of children to-day echo back with childish voices the answer to our question, "This hath God done." *F. W. Ingram.*

The Effect of Love for Others. "We talk about the telescope of faith," said Frances Ridley Havergal, "but I think we want even more

the microscopes of watchfulness and grateful love. Apply this to the little bits of our daily lives, and how wonderfully they come out!"

Learn that to love is one way to know
Or God or man; it is not love received
That maketh man to know the inner life
Of them that love him; his own love bestowed
Shall do it. *Jean Ingelow.*

Your Love for Your Neighbor Measures Your Love for God. In the engine-room it is impossible to look into the great boiler and see how much water it contains. But running up beside it is a tiny glass tube, which serves as a gage. As the water stands in the little tube, so it stands in the huge boiler. If the tube is half full, the boiler is half full. When the tube is empty, so is the boiler.

Do you sometimes ask, "How can I know I love God? I believe I do, but I want to know." Look at the gage! Your love for your fellows is the measure of your love for God. You are no more right with God than you are with man. As your love stands toward man in the gage, so it stands toward God in the great reservoir into which you can not see. *The Christian Endeavor World.*

III. Giving

She Hath Cast in More Than All. I ministered once in a church where a pew stood for a million of dollars. There were generous men and saintly women among them, not a few. But it only happened once in nine years that, after I had announced an offering for the following Sunday, a person stopped after the service to say, "I must be absent next Sunday, and wish you to take my gift now." She was not a Samaritan, but a cook, and she was to be absent to cook a rich man's dinner, and I had some reason to suspect that her gift was larger than his. *Bishop Huntington.*

Too many are like the old Scotsman who, with deep mellow voice and apparent earnestness, would sing: "Were the whole realm of nature mine, that were a gift far too small," and at the same time be feeling in his pocket for the smallest coin.

It is said that a silver quarter of a dollar, with a picture of liberty upon it, once looked down with great contempt upon a one cent piece, and said, "Oh, you dark-skinned, feather-trimmed barbarian, do you call yourself a coin?" "Well," said the penny, "it doesn't matter what name you call me by, I am found at church much oftener than you are." *W. H. Miley.*

The Good of Giving. We all know those poor dwarfed souls who never give, who close the petals of their helpfulness, withhold the fragrance of their love and sympathy, and in the end lose all they tried

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to hoard for themselves. They are cold, lifeless, apathetic; all their sympathies have dried up, they can not enter into the joys and sorrows, the higher and nobler emotions of life.

A strong man, watching one who was delicate and undeveloped, exercising in a gymnasium, said to him: "My dear man, how foolish you are to waste your energy on those parallel bars and dumb-bells. You are weak, physically, and ought to save what strength you have for your day's work. You can not afford to squander your vitality that way."

"Oh, but, my good sir," replied the other, "you don't see the philosophy underlying this exercise. The only way I can increase my power is by first giving out what I have. I give my strength to this apparatus, but it returns what I give it with compound interest. My muscles grow by giving it out in effort, in exercise." *O. S. Marden, in Success.*

Covetousness. Beware of growing covetous, for of all sins this is one of the most insidious. It is like the silting up of a river. As the stream comes down from the land, it brings with it sand and earth, and deposits these at the mouth; so that by degrees, unless it be carefully watched, it will block itself up, and leave no channel for ships of great burden. By daily deposit, it imperceptibly creates a bar which is dangerous to navigate. The more money a man acquires, the more closely he blocks up his liberty. Instead of doing more for God, he does less. *C. H. Spurgeon.*

A Prayer.

Lord! Who art merciful as well as just,
Incline Thine ear to me, a child of dust.
Not what I would, O Lord! I offer Thee,
Alas! but what I can.
Father Almighty! Who hast made me man,
And bade me look to Heaven, for Thou art there,
Accept my sacrifice and humble prayer.
Four things, which are not in Thy treasury,
I lay before Thee, Lord, with this petition:
My nothingness, my wants,
My sins, and my contrition. *Southey.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Give because you love to give, as a flower pours forth its perfume. *Spurgeon.*

We must live nobly to love nobly. *Charles Kingsley.*

The only adequate measure of love is the sacrifice the love will make. *G. H. Knight.*

Jesus exhibited and enforced love as the principle of life. *Watson.*

He who loves best his fellow man
Is loving God the holiest way he can. *Alice Cary.*

If you would not cease to love mankind, you must not cease to do them good. *Young Folks.*

When God comes to man, man looks round for his neighbor. *George Macdonald.*

If thou art not far off, enter; better otherwise to have been far off. *Bengel.*

The attempt to serve God without love, is like rowing against the tide. *John Watson.*

Can we fail to love Him whose love for us is, after all, almost the only fixed and sure thing we can count upon? *Marcus Dods.*

Love never contracts its circles; they widen by as fixed and sure a law as those around a pebble cast into still water. *James Russell Lowell.*

What we spent we had, what we left we lost, what we gave we have. *Epitaph upon the tombstone of the Earl of Devon and his wife.*

There is only one sin—selfishness; there is only one virtue or Christian grace—love. *S. L. Hoover.*

How shall you make man know that God loves him? Most of all by loving the man with a great love yourself, of which he shall know that, coming through you, it comes from beyond you. *Phillips Brooks.*

Do right, and God's recompense to you will be the power of doing more right: give, and God's reward to you will be the spirit of giving more: love, and God will pay you with the capacity for more love, for love is Heaven and the Spirit of God within you. *F. W. Robertson.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love. 1 John 4.7, 8.

In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. 1 John 4.9-11.

I will love Thee, O Lord, my strength. Psa. 18.1.

A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. John 13.34, 35.

Of all that Thou shalt give me, I will surely give the tenth unto thee. Gen. 28.22.

Freely ye have received, freely give. Matt. 10.8.

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Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive. Acts 20.35.

Let him give not grudgingly, nor of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. 2 Cor. 9.7.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

To give heed, to inquire, to be candid, honest, earnest in seeking, from the words of Christ what is needful for us to know, is to begin to live; deepen this spirit of earnest inquisitiveness, and you bring one nearer and nearer to the kingdom of God. *William Adams.*

THE LESSON SUMMARY

"Which is the first commandment of all?" a scribe asked Jesus. The Pharisees had been trying to keep the ten commandments and the many other minute commandments which they themselves had made. Jesus answered by giving the two commandments, love toward God and love toward others, as though He would say, as Professor Drummond says, "I will show you a more simple way: if you do one thing you will do these one hundred and ten things without ever thinking of them. If you love, you will unconsciously fulfill the whole law."

The scribe acknowledged that this is true, and that love is far greater than ceremonials, an unusual concession for a scribe to make. He was not far from the kingdom of God. And after that no man durst ask Jesus any question.

Entering the Court of the Women, Jesus sat where He could see the people as they brought their gifts for the temple service. With deep interest He watched the givers as they came to this or that treasury box. The one who gave the most of all, in His estimation, was the poor widow, who cast in the least. But her two mites were all her living, and Jesus always estimated, not by amount, but by motive. To those who gave, as to those who prayed, for ostentation, it was not imputed for righteousness.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The business of every Christian should be governed by the law "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

2. The mistake of humanitarianism is making the second the great and first commandment. *Philip Schaff.*

3. If wealth was the bar in the case of the young ruler, pride of intellect may have been fatal in this case of the scribe. The mental acumen which detects and approves spiritual truth, may, in the tragedy of human life, keep its possessor from entering the kingdom of God. *Swete.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. In the interpretation of the parable, who are the wise virgins? The foolish virgins? What does the extra supply of oil represent? 2. Was the answer of the wise virgins in verse nine a selfish one? 3. What is meant by the coming of the Son of Man? 4. How can one best "watch?" 5. Tell what Jesus said about watching in Matthew 24.36-51.

BETWEEN LESSON I AND LESSON II

Among the worshipers at the Passover Feast were certain Greeks who desired to see Jesus. Through Philip and Andrew, their request is made known to Him, and suggests to Him His words as recorded by John. "The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified," He says, and then adds the thought that He is to be glorified only through dying. "Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone." "Now is my soul troubled. Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name." And there came a voice from Heaven saying, "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." Through His own death He will "draw all men unto himself."

John adds his reflections upon the unbelief of the Jews, and in the last few verses of chapter twelve summarizes Christ's message. He was God's ambassador, sent to bring light and salvation to the world, and he that received Him, received the Father that sent Him and attained unto eternal life.

The disciples wished to have Jesus admire the wonderful temple; Jesus prophesied that "there shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down."

Upon reaching the Mount of Olives, to the question of the disciples—When?—Jesus did not answer directly, but warned them that false prophets, wars, earthquakes, famines, persecutions, would come. When the city of Jerusalem was invaded, then they must flee. Terrible disasters would follow the destruction of Jerusalem, and then would Christ's kingdom replace Judaism. The exact time of all things no one knows. Two shall be in the field; two women shall be grinding at the mill; one shall be taken and the other left. Watch, therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

The three parables of Matthew twenty-five illustrate the coming of the day of judgment: The Ten Virgins, The Talents, and The Sheep and the Goats. (John 12.20-50; Matt. 24; Mark 13; Luke 21.5-36.)

THE TEN VIRGINS

Matt. 25.1-13. (Read Matt. 24.1-51.) Commit vv. 1, 2.

Golden Text

Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh. Matt. 25.23.

Time: Tuesday Evening, April 4, A. D. 30.
Place: Mount of Olives. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 83 and 99–102.

LESSON TEXT. MATT. 25.1-13

1 Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.
2 And five of them were wise, and five *were* foolish.
3 They that *were* foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:
4 But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.
5 While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.
6 And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.
7 Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.
8 And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.
9 But the wise answered, saying *Not so;* lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.
10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.
11 Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.
12 But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.
13 Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *Then.* This word connects in Matthew's mind what follows with the time referred to in the last chapter. (See 24.36, 42, 44.) "The end of all things, when the Lord's final coming to judgment occurs; the latter virtually coincides, in the case of every individual, with the day of his death." *Schaeffer. Went forth.* From their own houses. *The bridegroom.* Representing Christ.

3. *Took their lamps, and took no oil with them.* In the interpretation of the parable, the lamp or torch is obviously the outward life of holi-

ness by which the children of Christ let their light shine before men (5.6), and the oil is the divine grace, or more definitely, the gift of the Holy Ghost, without which the torch first burns dimly and then expires. *Plumptre.*

4. *Oil in their vessels.* An extra supply of oil, in addition to that in the lamps.

6. *There was a cry made.* A sign of the coming of Christ. 24.30. *Schaff. Go ye out to meet him.* The virgins are at the house of the bride.

7. *Trimmed.* Made ready.

8. *Are gone out.* Margin, going out.

9. *Lest there be not enough.* R. V., *Peradventure there will not be enough.* The answer is not selfish, for if they had given, the oil would not have sufficed for all, and there would have been no lights. "The spiritual sense is: Every individual will be judged according to his own character and conduct; the righteousness of one mortal will not save another." *Schaeffer.*

13. *Watch, therefore.* Not, "Be ye always on the watch," but "Be ye always ready." *Jackson.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

4. *The wise took oil with their lamps.*

God gives each man one life, like a lamp, then gives
That lamp due measure of oil: lamp lighted—hold high, wave wide
Its comfort for others to share. *Browning.*

9. *Not so, lest there be not enough for us and you.* Character is a personal thing, and can not be given from one man to another. . . . In the house of a well-known citizen of Boston, there is an exquisite group in marble, representing the wise and the foolish virgins. The wise virgin is kneeling, in the act of trimming her lamp; and the foolish, with a face full of the most pathetic entreaty, seems begging from her a share of the oil which she is pouring in to feed the flame; but her sister, with a look of inexpressible sadness, and her hand uplifted as if to guard her treasure, is as if she were saying, "Not so." It is a touching rendering of the parable; and, as I looked at it, I was not surprised to be told that a famous New England essayist had said, as he was gazing at it, "She should have given her the oil." Who has not often sympathized with that feeling as he read the parable? We are apt to think that the five sisters were just a little stingy, and that what seems to be their selfishness was not at all in keeping with the benevolence the Gospel enjoins. But, not to insist upon the fact that it is impossible to construct an allegory which will hold in every particular, the answer made by the owner of the group to the man of genius is conclusive.

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"If," said he, "you and your neighbor have each signed a bill for a certain sum to fall due on a certain date, and you by dint of economy and perseverance have been able to lay by just enough to meet your own obligation, while your neighbor, wasting his hours on trifles, has made no provision for the day of settlement; and if, on the morning on which the bills fall due, he should come, beseeching you to give him some of your money to help him to pay his debt—would you give it to him?" That is a pecuniary illustration, and there is no evading the force of the argument. But the parable treats of character; and that may be always labeled "not transferable," for its qualities can not be given by one man to another, even if he were ever so willing to part with them. *William M. Taylor, Parables of Our Lord.*

10. *The door was shut.*

> No light had we: for that we do repent:
> And, learning this, the Bridegroom will relent.
> "Too late, too late, ye cannot enter now."
> No light, so late! and dark and chill the night!
> Oh, let us in, that we may find the light!
> "Too late, too late! ye cannot enter now." *Tennyson.*

13. *Watch, therefore.* It is the air of expectancy that pervades this parable, and gives it its character. It all looks forward. It is busied with the future, not the past. The waiting virgins, the sleepless eyes, the well-filled lamps, and then the hurried stir, the rustling garments, the passing voices, and the opening and closing of doors—all the movement is expectant, and is full of one idea: Be ready, for a future is coming—new visions—new destinies—new duties. Forget the past! Look forward! . . .

There is one sort of life which a man will live who anticipates no future at all, who lives wholly in the present. There is another sort of life for the man whose future is all clear to him, all ticketed and dated. There is yet another life for the man who knows that larger and stranger things are coming than he comprehends, who expects surprises. . . .

The coming of Christ is certainly not a time when He draws near to the world, for He is in the world always. It must be, then, some time or times in which His presence becomes manifest. Such comings there are several of. Men discuss which of them the text refers to—whether to the final coming for judgment, the coming to every man at death, or the coming of the spirit at man's conversion. Let us not try to settle which it means. It cultivates the life of watchfulness within us, not to know when Christ is coming to judge the world, when He is coming to call us to Himself by death, when He is coming by some great experience to our souls. . . .

Surely it is a blessed Father who lets us know that He is coming,

but does not tell us when. We are like children off at school, to whom the father sends word that he will bring them home, that so they may study all the harder and be ready, but does not fix the day lest they should drop their books altogether and merely stand looking for him out of the window, wasting their time. God will bring the shortness of life home to all of us so as to make us say, "We will work the harder," but He will not let it weigh upon any of us so as to set us thinking, "It is not worth while to work." *Phillips Brooks.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

1. *They went forth to meet the bridegroom.* When, in the East, the day approaches for the wedding of two persons betrothed, preparations are made for festivities in the homes of both. Invitations are sent out in advance by the parents on both sides, to their kinsfolk and friends, to come to the feasts which are provided in both houses. The marriage proper is the bringing of the bride by the bridegroom to his own home, or to his mother's home—as his home is at such a time ordinarily spoken of. This looking upon the bride as belonging to the mother of the groom is a distinctive feature of the family life of the primitive East. *H. Clay Trumbull, Studies in Oriental Social Life.*

3. *Took their lamps.* Marriages in the East have always been celebrated at night. The streets are wholly dark, and each one is expected to carry his own light. One of the rules of the city of Jerusalem requires this at the present day. The word *lamp* is rendered *torch* in John 18.3. A torch was made by fastening to a wooden staff either a rod of iron wound about with oil-saturated rags, or a small vessel or pan containing a wick saturated with oil.

Oil Lamps and Oil Vessels

"In ancient times," says Van Lennep in *Bible Lands,* "lamps were made of earthenware, and the wealthy had them of brass, silver, or even of gold. They were often elegant in form and elaborate in design. They were covered at the top, where there is a hole for pouring in the oil, while another hole at the side received the wick; there is often a handle large enough to pass one finger through, for the purpose of holding it. When they were required to burn for a considerable time, they needed to be replenished, and a small earthen jar filled

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with oil was set near the lamp, as it now is, from which a new supply was added whenever the light grew dim."

10. *The door was shut.* While they went to purchase oil, the procession was formed and moved, not to the church, as is the custom of Christians, but to the house of the bridegroom, as do the Moslems, and other sects, and as did the Jews in the time of our Saviour. The door was then shut, in order to avoid the danger arising from violent men, who might make an irruption, rob and carry off jewelry, costly garments, and even the bride herself. The tardy virgins who, anxious to join in the concluding festivities of the wedding, finally came crying, "Lord, Lord, open to us," could not, of course, be admitted, nor was their cry recognized: "Verily I say unto you, I know you not," was the response of the wary bridegroom. *Van Lennep.*

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Did you ever wonder what you would do in case your home caught on fire? Did you ever know one whose courage was tested in some such way? What did he do? Can one be sure that he is very brave unless he has proved it when something has happened to test his bravery?

Two swimmers may seemingly be equally strong as long as their endurance is not put to a test. But let them be overthrown from a boat far from shore, and one may be able to reach the land while the other sinks because his strength soon gives out.

What is the title of our lesson to-day? What were five of the virgins called? The other five? These ten virgins were all seemingly alike at first; they all had their lamps ready for the bridal procession, and if the bridegroom had come early they would all have gone in with him. But the bridegroom tarried, and the lamps burnt low with the long delay, and thus the forethought of the ten virgins was tested.

For Older Pupils. One school of piety has always held that the choice preparation for the Eternal World is seclusion and devotion, and when the Second Advent was confidently expected, in the Middle Ages, society was disorganized and life arrested in Europe. Western Christendom was caught in a spasm of repentance, and even irreligious people were shaken; some entered sacred houses; some hid themselves in caves; some set out for Palestine to meet the Lord. . . .

Charles V of Spain was the greatest personage in the history of his day—the heir of four royal lines, ruler of Spain, the Netherlands, Austria, and Naples, for whom Cortes had also conquered the New World. He led huge armies, gained great victories, conducted momentous affairs, lived amid critical events. Amid these stirring circumstances Charles lived; yet he was ever thinking of the end, and had resolved, with Isabella, his loved Queen, to retire at a certain time into a holy place and

wait for Christ. The Master came for her before the day arrived, but Charles abdicated his throne and divested himself of power amid general sorrow and admiration, and gave his last days to the practice of religion in the Monastery of Yuste.

Contrast with this cloistered piety the scene in the American Senate-house during the Revolution, when at mid-day a great darkness fell and no man could see his brother's face. Even those stout Puritans were for the moment dismayed. Voices cried, "It is the Day of Judgment," and there was some confusion. Then one of the Fathers rose and said, "Whether it be the Judgment Day or no, I know not, but this I know, that it is God's will we save our country, and we shall be judged accordingly. I move that the candles be lit, and that we go on with our business." With the Catholic, foresight spelt devotion—with the Puritan, duty. *Ian Maclaren, in The Mind of the Master.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. Reserve Power

The Oil Represents Reserve Power of Character. There is a certain superficial goodness, which shines for the moment much as the true light of grace shines, but is connected with no perennial supply; there is no oil vessel from which the lamps can be constantly replenished. There may be a flaring up for a moment; but there is no steady enduring light. . . . The distinction is between those worldly Christians, whose devotion is a thing of now and then, and those thorough Christians whose devotion is habitual, not always to be recognized on the surface of their life, but so as to be always there, the deep abiding habit of their souls. There is the secret of watchfulness; there is the secret of readiness for the coming of the Lord. *John Monro Gibson.*

What Reserve Energy Can Do. Homer wrote the *Iliad* because he was blind and driven in upon his own resources. Dante wrote his *Inferno* because he was exiled and in isolation had time to store up his mental treasure. Webster and Lincoln spent years in the forests and fields, reflecting and brooding, analyzing and comparing. Many a long summer passed while they sowed and garnered their mental treasures. Pasteur gave our generation much because for thirty years he isolated himself and got much to give. When Lowell speaks of the attar of roses, he reminds us of the whole fields of crimson blossoms that have been swept together in one tiny vial. When Starr King saw the great trees of California standing forth twenty-five feet in diameter and lifting their crowns three hundred feet into the sunshine, he was so impressed by their dignity and beauty as to be touched to tears; but the size of the trees did not explain his emotion. It was the thought of the reserve energies that had been compacted into them. The mountains had given

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their iron and rich stimulants, the hills had given their soil, the clouds had given their rain and snow, a thousand summers and winters had poured forth their treasure about the vast roots. . . .

The flow of the faucet is determined by the fullness of the reservoir. The speed of the electric car is fixed by the energy stored in the power-house. The power of the piston is in the push of the accumulated steam. The Nile has force to feed civilization, because there are a thousand streams and rivers, a thousand hills and mountains lying back of the Nile's current, and crowding it forward. *Newell Dwight Hillis, A Man's Value to Society.*

The Lesson of a Fable. There is an old fable that once upon a time a wild boar of the jungle was whetting his tusks against the trunk of a tree. A fox passing by asked him why he did this, seeing that neither hunter nor hound was near. "True," said the boar, "but when that danger does arrive I shall have something else to do than to sharpen my weapons."

Reserve Moral Force. It is the fate of those who play with their consciences that they diminish the reserve moral forces of their natures. We need not only moral power for the ordinary temptations of daily life; we need reserves of moral strength for the hours of exceptional trial. The habit of moral integrity and spiritual exercise provides these reserves. Those who possess them may stumble, but they shall not fall; or if they fall, they may arise because they have not let go of the hand of Heaven; and the eternal God is their portion. *F. W. Robertson.*

II. The Door Was Shut

What Does It Mean? It means that the opportunity was gone. Our government has followed in the far East "the policy of the open door"; they do not want to grasp fresh territory, but they insist that we, along with other nations, shall have the opportunity of pushing our trade. The favorite motto of the late Frances Willard was, "Enter every open door": she saw the necessity of seizing every opportunity of usefulness. A door is an opportunity. An open door is an opportunity that is still within reach. A shut door is an opportunity that has gone past.

I am the door, says Jesus. It means that He is the great opportunity of the human race! Now in what sense is He an opportunity to men? What do they gain by accepting the offer of Himself? What do they lose by rejecting or neglecting it? The question might be answered in many ways, but here we can not do better than follow His own words. "By me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." *J. M. E. Ross.*

The Statue of Opportunity. In one of the ancient cities of Greece there once stood a beautiful statue. A tradition about a conversation between a traveler and the statue has been preserved, which, says the

Christian Press, not only gives us an excellent description of the statue, but discloses the lesson which the wise old Greeks wished to convey to every passer-by.

"What is thy name, O statue?"
"I am called Opportunity."
"Who made thee?"
"Lysippus."
"Why art thou on thy toes?"
"To show that I stay but a moment."
"Why hast thou wings on thy feet?"
"To show how quickly I pass by."
"But why is thy hair so long on the forehead?"
"That men may seize me when they meet me."
"Why, then, is thy head so bald behind?"
"To show that when I have once passed I can not be caught."

Awake! arise! the hour is late!
Angels are knocking at thy door!
They are in haste, and cannot wait,
And once departed come no more. *Longfellow.*

Whose Fault? There is an old Persian saying about a certain pavement that was supposed to have lumps of gold under it. The man who lifted none of the pavement, the saying went, would get none of the gold. He who lifted part of it might, or might not, find gold. But if he lifted all of it, he would obtain the treasure. Opportunity's gold is under every day's pavement for us. But it may be under the one stone that we passed by. If we lose it, whose fault is it? *Alfred C. Harmsworth.*

There is a tide in the affairs of men
Which taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries. *Shakespeare.*

Preparation for Opportunities. What a signal piece of good fortune in the life of Daniel Webster was the onslaught on New England made by the fiery Carolinian, John Y. Hayne, the reply to which—confessedly the high-water mark of eloquence since Demosthenes—won for the Northern senator undying fame! But of what advantage would this splendid opportunity have been to him if his whole previous life had not been a training and a preparation for it—if he had not, with the instinct of genius, made a profound study of the constitutional questions involved in the debate, and thus equipped himself for the assault which he repelled with such crushing energy.

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It is only as we discharge the duties and abide the tests of our present obscure every-day life that we shall be prepared for the general requirements, the signal opportunities, the supreme test days that may be in store for us. "The stone that is fit for the wall does not long lie in the ditch." *Forward.*

A Sonnet

Master of human destinies am I!
Fame, love, and fortune on my footsteps wait.
Cities and fields I walk; I penetrate
Deserts and seas remote, and, passing by
Hovel and mart and palace, soon or late,
I knock unbidden once at every gate!
If sleeping, wake; if feasting, rise before
I turn away. It is the hour of fate,
And they who follow me reach every state
Mortals desire, and conquer every foe
Save death; but those who doubt or hesitate,
Condemned to failure, penury, and woe,
Seek me in vain, and uselessly implore.
I answer not, and I return no more! *John J. Ingalls.*

III. Watch, Therefore

Prepared. When, in 1870, France declared war against Germany, an official brought the message at night to Von Moltke. The General coolly said to the officer, "Go to pigeonhole number ——, in my safe, take a paper from it, and telegraph as there directed to the different troops of the empire," and then turned over and calmly went to sleep again. The next morning as Von Moltke was taking his customary walk, a friend said to him, "General, you seem to be taking it very easy. Aren't you afraid of the situation? I should think that you would be very busy." But Von Moltke replied, "All my work for this time has been done long beforehand, and every thing that can be done now has been done."

Unprepared. Many of the lamentable failures of life come from not being ready. The firemen in our great cities are always on the alert. The instant the alarm of fire comes in, the harness drops upon the horses, the doors swing open, and the engine is on the way to the scene of the conflagration. Five minutes' delay may mean the loss of thousands of dollars and perhaps human lives. When wild beasts are seeking to pounce upon the traveler, he must have a gun loaded. The Prince Imperial of France lost his life in South Africa because he waited a moment after he was warned to flee. His mother is reported to have said

that her son's great fault was never being quite ready. *The Sunday School World.*

Eternal Vigilance. The price of spiritual life is eternal vigilance. Temper will start up like a mastiff and inflict cruel bites unless we keep him muzzled. An unruly tongue breaks loose, or some other besetting sin kindles like powder with a spark. Just as surely as insensibility to pain is a symptom of fatal disease, so surely is insensibility to the approach of sin a symptom of spiritual decline and death. Watch and pray means an eye always open and lips never sealed. *Theodore L. Cuyler.*

Maranatha—Our Lord cometh—was the great watchword of the waiting church. When, at the table of the Lord, they ate the bread and drank the cup, they proclaimed His death "till he come." "Amen; come, Lord Jesus," is the passionate cry with which our English Scriptures close. *George Jackson.*

The Time is Now. The old naturalists, who tell a good many things which are not true, as well as some which are, say that the birds of Norway always fly more swiftly than any others, because the summer days are so short, therefore they have so much to do in such a little time. Surely we should fly more swiftly to do our Lord's work if we would only meditate upon the fact that the day is so short, and the night is so near at hand. *Spurgeon.*

"It is a melancholy task for us, the ministers of the Gospel, to be so often applied to, on the approach of death, by those who have not prepared for the great change; whose seed-time has been delayed till the harvest. . . . 'Give us of your oil (they seem to say), for our lamps are going out.'

"The time to prepare for the Lord's coming is *now.*

"'Be ye therefore ready,' that you may inherit the blessing promised to those faithful servants 'whom the Lord when he cometh, shall find watching.' 'For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. . . . But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. . . . Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.'" *Archbishop Whately.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

The last day lies hid; therefore watch every day. *Augustine.*

The best preparation for the future is the present well seen to. *George Macdonald.*

Watchfulness keeps us prayerful and prayerfulness keeps us watchful.

Borrowed faith is worthless as religious capital. *Chicago Tribune.*

Good works without faith are like lamps without oil, which are soon extinguished. *Luther.*

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No converted man will stay converted unless God watches with him and he watches over himself. *Cuyler.*

The only way to "prepare to meet thy God," is to live with thy God so that to meet Him will be nothing strange. *Phillips Brooks.*

Not what death finds us doing, but how death finds us furnished is the important question. *Lyman Abbott.*

Of all sad words of tongue or pen,
The saddest are these, It might have been. *Whittier.*

Satan has no pleasure in religious watch-towers: he wastes not his strength upon strongholds. *Hornbeck.*

We are always complaining our days are few, and acting as though there would be no end of them. *Joseph Addison.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

The Lord knoweth them that are his. 2 Tim. 2.19.

Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshiper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth. John 9.31.

It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. Acts 1.7.

But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. Matt. 24.36.

For the Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. 1 Thess. 4.16.

But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming, and shall begin to smite his fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; the Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder and appoint him a portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Matt. 24.48-51.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Let me remember that the kindling of the light is only part of the work that needs to be done. The other part is the sustaining and nourishing of the light when kindled: and if the first part is God's, the second part is mine. Much secret fellowship with God, much prayerful intercourse with Him, nothing else than this will maintain my light, even though Christ Himself has kindled it. I must watch, therefore, lest by indolence, or negligence, or worldliness, my prayer-life become a fickle and inconstant thing, and so my candle burn too low to be of any use. *G. H. Knight.*

THE LESSON SUMMARY

Christ is still sitting on the Mount of Olives late in the afternoon of His last day of public ministry. He has been talking to His disciples about "the end" and now He illustrates by two parables—the Ten Virgins and the Talents—the preparation that each must make for His own death, which is to him "The end" and may come at any time.

The parable of the Ten Virgins is realistic and beautiful, and it has been celebrated in poetry, painting, and drama. The kingdom of Heaven, Christ says, is like ten virgins who went forth to meet the bridegroom, but he delayed his coming, and the oil in their lamps burned low. "Behold the bridegroom cometh," is the cry at midnight, and five virgins make ready their lamps to go to meet him, but five other virgins have not provided an extra supply of oil, and are not ready. "Give us of your oil," they say to the wise virgins; but "not so," is the necessary answer, "lest there be not enough for us and you." The foolish virgins go at that late hour to procure oil, the procession moves on without them and enters the bridegroom's house. The door is shut, and when the belated virgins ask admittance they are refused; "I know you not," is the bridegroom's word to them. "Watch, therefore," says Christ, "for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. There are no works of supererogation which can be put to the account of another, as the Papists vainly imagine. *Schaeffer.*

2. There is both a wrong and a right concern for the "morrow." It is wrong to worry over it; it is right to anticipate and prepare for it. It is foolish merely to enjoy the present. *R. Tuck.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. What is the meaning and history of the word *talent?* 2. Why did the one who gained two talents receive the same reward as the one who gained five talents? 3. What is meant by the "joy of thy Lord?" 4. What is the meaning of the one-talented man's words in verse 24? 5. What four disciples are the five-talented men? What seven disciples are the two-talented men? What one disciple is the wicked and slothful servant? 6. What are the resemblances between the parable of the Talents and that of the Pounds (Luke 19.11-27)? What are the differences? What common lesson do they teach? What different lesson?

BETWEEN LESSON II AND LESSON III

The parable of the Talents immediately follows that of the Virgins.

THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS

Matt. 25.14-30. (Read Luke 19.11-27.) Commit v. 21.

Golden Text

A faithful man shall abound with blessings. Prov. 28:20.

Time: Tuesday evening, April 4, A. D. 30.
Place: Mount of Olives. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 83 and 103-108.

LESSON TEXT. MATT. 25.14-30

14 For *the kingdom of heaven is* as a man travelling into a far country, *who* called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.
15 And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.
16 Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made *them* other five talents.
17 And likewise he that *had received* two, he also gained other two.
18 But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.
19 After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.
20 And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more.
21 His lord said unto him, Well done, *thou* good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.
22 He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them.
23 His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.
24 Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed:
25 And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, *there* thou hast *that is* thine.
26 His lord answered and said unto him, *Thou* wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed:

27 Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and *then* at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.
28 Take therefore the talent from him, and give *it* unto him which hath ten talents.
29 For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.
30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

14. *A man.* Who represents Christ. *His own servants.* His twelve disciples, and likewise His professed followers. *His goods.* All the possessions of men—life, physical and mental powers, etc.—are here represented as God's property, entrusted to men as a loan.

15. *Talents.* A Greek denomination representing at first a certain fixed weight of gold or silver, and later a certain amount of money. A talent of silver was equivalent to two thousand dollars of our money. In the interpretation of the parable, the talents are the opportunities for service. From the use of the word *talent* in this parable has come our meaning of the word as a natural gift or endowment. *According to his several ability.* To each one according to his own peculiar capacity or fitness. "The degree of the gift is the measure of accountability. Whether is it fairer to give to a man possessed of one degree of ability five talents or one? Is it fairer to endow him according to his ability or beyond his ability? It is enough to say that in the one case failure is crime, and in the other necessity." *James Stirling.*

16. *Traded with the same.* In other words, he exercised his faculties and powers in his master's service and with a view to his master's interests. *Williams.*

19. *The Lord cometh.* At the final judgment.

23. *Well done.* The language of the Judge on the last day, and the reward which He bestows, will depend upon the fidelity and zeal of the individual exclusively, and not on the actual amount of his labors on earth. *Schaeffer.*

24. *Reaping where thou hast not sown,* and *gathering where thou hast not strawed.* A proverbial saying. *Strawed,* R. V., *didst scatter.*

26. *Thou knowest.* A question. Granting that this were the case; compare Luke 19.22: Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee. *Schaff.*

27. *Exchangers,* R. V., *bankers.* Literally, the table or counter-keepers. *Usury,* R. V., *interest.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

15. *To one he gave five talents, to another two.* Birth-gifts are quan-

tities fixed and unalterable. No heartrendings can change the two-talent nature into a ten-talent man. No agony of effort can add a cubit to the stature. The eagle flies over the chasm as easily as an ant crawls over a crack in the ground. Once an oak, always an oak. Care and culture can thicken the girth of a tree, but no degree of culture can cause an oak bough to bring forth figs instead of acorns. Rebellion against temperament and circumstances is sure to end in the breaking of the heart. Happiness and success begin with the sincere acceptance of the birth-gift and career God hath chosen. *Newell Dwight Hillis.*

19. *After a long time.* The mind of the first generation was fixed, with an intensity which we have difficulty in conceiving, on the second coming of the Lord; and some seem to have expected that event so soon that they abandoned all worldly business, and gave themselves up to an attitude of patient waiting, or to feverish, restless excitement. The demoralizing effect of the belief in the near approach of the second advent manifested itself to such an extent in the Church at Thessalonica, that the Apostle Paul found it needful to interpose, and to endeavor by reasonable counsels of Christian wisdom to bring the fanaticized community to a soberer state of mind. The sum of his advice was, Work, and do not merely idly wait. *A. B. Bruce.*

21. *Thou good and faithful servant.* One who is good, ἀγαθός, in the sense of putting his whole heart and soul into his work, can not fail to be faithful, πιστὸς, for the very secret of fidelity is single-heartedness, and the sole cause of unfaithfulness is a divided heart. *A. B. Bruce.*

21. *Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.* According to the drift of Jesus' preaching, the whole spiritual content of this present life, its knowledge, skill, aspirations, character, will be carried over into the future, and life hereafter be the continuation of life here.

This assumption underlies Jesus' words at every turn, and comes to the surface in the parables of Service and Reward. They imply the continuity of life. They illuminate its conditions. The Master commits five talents to the servant, and the trust is shrewdly managed. The five become ten, and the Master is fully satisfied. What reward does He propose for His servant? Is it release from labor and responsibility—a future in contrast with the past? Is it, so to say, retirement and a pension? It would not be absurd, but it would be less than the best. Something more could surely be done with this man's exercised and developed gifts—his foresight, prudence, courage, enterprise. The past shapes the future, and this servant, having served his apprenticeship, becomes himself a master, ruler over many things. So he entered into the joy of the Lord, and the joy for which Jesus endured the cross is a patient and perpetual ministry. Life will be raised, not reversed; work will not be closed, it will be emancipated. The fret will be gone, not the labor; the disappointment, not the responsibility. Our disability shall

be no more; our capacity shall be ours for ever, and so the thorns shall be taken from our crown. *John Watson, in The Mind of the Master.*

23. *Thou hast been faithful.* There are three great elements of work in the kingdom of God—quantity, quality, and ability. Quality is a matter of character; ability, of endowment; quantity, of improvement. When we sit down before an artist's picture, we consider his skill as a draughtsman and colorist, and the power of his mind to evolve ideas. These represent his ability. We consider the character of his picture, the lesson it teaches—whether it awakens pure and high thoughts, or base ones; whether it is true to the great laws of art. These represent quality. And then we sum up the result, and ask how much of the picture the artist with his degree of ability has made. What rank will it take? Is it a great picture, or a poor picture? The answer to that is quantity.

How do these three stand related to each other in Christian work and reward. For what is reward given in the kingdom of God—for ability, quantity, or quality? In our parable of the talents we find that the endowment, the ability, of the several servants was not equal. It is represented by the difference between five, two, and one. In the award we notice that the difference between five and two is wiped out or ignored; and that the same reward is given to the servant who brought two for two, as to him who brought five for five. Here, then, it appears that quantity does not enter into the question of reward.

Quality is fixed by the proportion of quantity to ability; in other words, by the answer to the question, did the servant do all he could with his endowment? Were two talents all the interest of which his capital admitted with the most faithful and diligent use? The award in this parable then is based, not on the difference between the returns, but upon the fact common to both returns, that ability had been worked at its highest power, and had yielded the most and best of which it was capable; that both alike bore the stamp of faithfulness. To both servants it is said, "Thou hast been faithful"; to both, therefore, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Faithfulness imparts the quality which answers God's test of moral value; and value and award in the kingdom of God turns upon quality, and not upon quantity or ability. *Marvin R. Vincent.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

14. *As a man travelling into a far country.* The story is true to the oriental life of the period; for, when a wealthy man was leaving his home for a while, two courses were open to him for the arrangement of his affairs: Either he might make his confidential slaves his agents, committing to them the tilling of his land, and giving to them his money to be used by them in trade; or he might take advantage of the money-changing system which had been introduced by the Phenicians and which

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was at the time in full operation throughout the Roman empire. *Taylor.*

16. *He went and traded with the same.* The Jews have always been a trading people. They had in the first century the same genius for commerce as now. This is obvious from the prominent place which Jesus gives in His parables to the bank—the talents, the stewards, the questions of interest, capital, and revenue. Christ made use of such comparisons because He knew how familiar they were to His hearers, and the Fathers have handed down to us a saying of His which is not in the Gospels, but which belongs to the same order of thought: "Be good bankers," He is reported to have said. *Edmond Stapfer.*

18. *He hid his lord's money.* It is a common practice in the East to bury money for safe-keeping.

27. *Thou oughtest to have put my money to the bankers.* The Greek word, translated exchangers or bankers, is derived from the bank or bench on which money was placed. There were numerous money-changers or bankers in Palestine, who received deposits at interest. The rate of interest varied from four to forty per cent. The Old English word *usury,* from the Latin *usura,* signified at first merely the sum paid for the use of money, but it gradually became a "fallen word," signifying exorbitant interest.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. As we walk along the sea-shore when the tide is far out we see many pools of water left here and there in the sand. We may imagine the large pools exulting in their size, proclaiming to the others that they mirror in their depths the sun and all the heavens, while the tiny pools complain because they are so small, the sun's rays will soon drink them up, they are of no use, they can accomplish nothing. But look, the mighty ocean is no longer receding; it comes back upon the land, and all the pools, great and small, are swallowed up in its onward rush. So will it be with our duties and opportunities when our lives are ruled by the love of God; whether small and commonplace or great and unusual, it matters not, so long as they form a part of God's great plan. That God expects each one of us to do our best, is one of the great lessons of Christ's Parable of the Talents.

For Older Pupils. The Parable of the Talents completes the Parable of the Ten Virgins. By the latter parable Christ taught the duty of watchfulness; by the former He taught the duty of work. We must not only watch and pray, we must work in order to be found worthy of entrance into the kingdom. "The Parable of the Ten Virgins," says Doctor John Monro Gibson, "shows the necessity of a constant supply of inward grace; the Parable of the Talents, the need of unremitting outward activity. The teaching of the first is, Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life; of the second. Do good as ye

have opportunity, Be faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. Not How Much, But How Well

Every One Has at Least One Talent. In Victoria I was anxious to go down into a gold mine, so I put on the rough dress of the miner, and lit my candle, and went down for some hundreds of feet under ground. Here and there between the dark rock ran a line of white quartz, just like a vein of marble. Not a sign or trace of gold glistened in the candle-light; not a single particle of the precious metal gleamed anywhere. The gold was in the quartz, but invisible. To me there was no sign, no possibility of gold. I sighed and said, "So this is a gold mine—water dripping from above, muddy puddles underfoot, with roof and sides of bare rock." Yet the expert knew it, and saw in it the treasure, and from here there went the flashing gold.

Come, let us take it to ourselves. There is a sigh from many a heart: What good am I to any one anywhere? Here is comfort and hope for such an one. Not only when we have gained a thousand victories, and reached some eminence and usefulness, shall God see in us some worth, but now.

There are some who are amazed at the use God has made of them. But a few years ago, if they had been told that they would be engaged in such work for the Master as they are doing to-day, they would have fainted at the idea of attempting it. God sees the possibilities. *Mark Guy Pearse.*

The Ten Talents and the One Talent. "Every once in a while," says Doctor Charles H. Parkhurst, "I am told that such and such a brilliant young man or woman has come into our congregation, and that he or she will be likely to prove a great acquisition. I confess that it is a bait at which I nibble less than I used to. If I want a light to read by, I would rather have a good long tallow dip than a streak of lightning. A very small river will carry a good deal of water to the sea if it keeps running."

Fidelity in Little Things. The popular idea is, that moral responsibility is concerned mostly with great things. Fidelity has nothing whatever to do with the magnitude of the trust. Let us beware of flattering ourselves that we will be loyal to God in great issues, even though we may not be in smaller ones. The moral quality which determines the smaller issue will determine the greater one. . . .

Unfaithfulness in the smallest work, in the lowest sphere, is no recommendation for promotion. You do not chose for foreman of your establishment the man who has been doing slovenly work in a lower place.

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If your clerk has stolen a dime, you will not make him your cashier. It is not a question of quantity, but of quality. You do not consider how much he stole, but that he stole. It is quite enough for you to know that he will steal, and the dime brings out the fact quite as well as a thousand dollars. *Marvin R. Vincent.*

Whatever Your Talent, Double It. When Nelson signaled from his flag-ship to every person in the fleet, "England expects every man to do his duty," it did not mean the same to all. To the captains it meant that they should do their very best as commanders; to the marines, that they should do their best at the guns; to the sailors, that they should do their best in sailing the ships; to the cabin-boys, that they should do their best as messengers. Every one succeeded who did the best he could. Success is not a question of talents, but of doubling them. It is not a question of present position, but of making the most of one's self. *Girard B. Hallock.*

II. Use or Lose

The Universal Law. "Unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath." This seems a hard law, but it is a just one. The first servant had gained other five talents, the second, other two talents; to each the Lord said, "I will make thee ruler over many things." The third servant had gained nothing with his one talent, and the command is, "Take the talent from him."

How this law works is interestingly shown by Doctor Hillis in *A Man's Value to Society.*

"In the realm of wisdom, the more a man knows the more he can know. Sir William Jones tells us that he gave five years to mastering his first language, while six weeks were sufficient for acquiring his fortieth dialect. Thus, too, in the realm of inventive skill, each tool becomes the parent of a score of other tools. The studies preparatory to Edison's first mechanism covered a long period of years; but, gaining momentum, his inventive skill increased in geometric ratio, until to-day the famous electrician holds nearly a thousand patents.

The Result of Persistent Neglect. Among the nursery rhymes that sometimes run through my head is one about the great auk which could neither walk nor fly. Modern science tells us why. The auk became a famous swimmer. He deserted the air and land for water. He failed to use his wings and legs except as paddles, and so it came to pass that wings and legs both shriveled until he was practically helpless out of water. There is in Africa a peculiar type of ape. There is no mystery about the way in which he came to lose his tail. There came a time when he forsook tree-climbing for walking. Tails were no longer needed by apes that no longer swung from trees; consequently Nature quietly withheld the investment.

We have lost certain powers in the same wise. We can not begin to see with the acuteness of the hawk. We lack the delicate sense of hearing of the dog. We are unable to do well a score of things the aborigine could do, simply because by reason of our enfranchisement from the necessity he knew, Nature has taken away the unneeded special qualifications. The inert hand must wither. The unused foot grows helpless. The musician must practise every day. Nature palsies the useless member.

It is the common experience that any gift, persistently neglected, grows poor and finally disappears. Let any one cultivate an unloving spirit and the capacity to love will die. Let him persistently shut his eyes to "whatsoever things are true—and honest," and he eventually becomes blind to the best beauties of life. All that one needs to do to forfeit an immortal power is to wrap it in a napkin of disuse.

I have sometimes thought that the most heart-breaking surprises the future can afford will be the sight of the unused powers of this present life, the possibilities of doing and becoming, as in heedlessness their stewards buried them. *George Clarke Peck.*

Losing Christians. Astronomers tell us of worlds that have lost their fires. They burned brightly once. Now they are cold and dark. Their very existence can only be seen by a mathematical computation; for they are invisible to the eye. Many a Christian, too, has lost his light-giving power; and none but the Great Astronomer who numbereth the stars, can see him in his firmament at all. It was a solemn thought Christ spoke when He said, "From the one that hath not shall be taken away that which he hath," for one of the penalties of refusing service is to be denied opportunities for service afterwards. *G. H. Knight.*

III. The Unprofitable Servant

The Purpose of Goodness. Good always means good *for*. That little preposition can not be absent from our minds, though it need not audibly be uttered. The knife is good for cutting, the day for business, the President for the needs of his country. Omit the for, and goodness ceases. To be bad or good implies external reference. To be good means to further something, to be an efficient means; and the end to be furthered must be already in mind before the word good is spoken. *George Herbert Palmer.*

Thou Slothful Servant. Genius unexerted is no more genius than a bushel of acorns is a forest of oaks. There may be epics in men's brains, just as there are oaks in acorns, but the tree and the book must come out before we can measure them. We very naturally recall here that class of grumblers and wishers who spend their time in longing to be higher than they are, while they should be employed in advancing themselves. How many men would fain go to bed dunces and wake up Solomons? You reap what you have sown. Those who sow dunce seed,

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vice seed, laziness seed, usually get a crop. They that sow wind reap a whirlwind. A man of mere "capacity undeveloped" is only an organized day-dream with a skin on it. A flint and a genius that will not strike fire are no better than wet junk wood. *Ralph Waldo Emerson.*

What We Have Left Undone. "An engine of one-cat power running all the time," says George William Curtis, "is more effective than one of forty-horse power standing idle." The fault of the unprofitable servant was not in having only one talent, but in failing to make any use of that talent.

"Never but once, during His abode on the earth, did our Lord blast any created thing," says William M. Taylor in *The Parables of Our Lord,* "and that was when He came to the fig-tree, looking for fruit, and found thereon 'nothing but leaves.' He did not blight it into perpetual barrenness because it produced wild fruit, or because it bore poisonous figs, but because he found on it 'nothing but leaves'; and so the curse of an eternal withering shall fall at last upon the soul which has done nothing with its opportunities on the earth."

"If, through carelessness, or indolence, or selfishness, a good opportunity is not put into effect," Doctor Maltbie Babcock once wrote, "we have lost an opportunity, demoralized ourselves, and stolen from the pile of possible good. To be born and not fed, is to perish. To launch a ship and neglect it, is to lose it. To have a talent and bury it, is to be a wicked and slothful servant. For in the end we shall be judged, not alone by what we have done, but by what we could have done."

Ineffective People. The will is like a dynamo. When the armature spins rapidly close to the magnetic field, the mechanical power which drives it—steam or water—is changed to electric power. It is no longer confined to the factory, but conducted through wires to do its work miles away, lighting the city or propelling its cars. But if the shafting is not properly connected, or the mechanical and electrical parts are not carefully adjusted, no power passes out; the engine hums as a gigantic illustration of wasted energy. There are many people who possess great ability, but it is, as it were, down in the cellar of the soul. They are unable to "connect up" with outward duty or opportunity, and hence are practically as unserviceable to society as so many wooden angels. *James L. Ludlow.*

Awake! arise! the athlete's arm
Loses its strength by too much rest;
The fallow land, the untilled farm
Produces only weeds at best. *Longfellow.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Goodness outranks goods. *Maltbie Babcock.*
The Judge will not tolerate the unlit torch. *Packard.*

It is not enough not to steal; the Lord of the kingdom demands "interest." *George Dana Boardman.*

Life, like seed, is to be sown, not hoarded. *Wm. M. Taylor.*

All service ranks the same with God. *Browning.*

Lord, help us so to act that we may render our account with joy and not with grief. *Spurgeon.*

He who hath this or that, and makes no use of it, may not improperly be said both to have it and not to have it. *Aristotle.*

Life goes from test to test; it is like any other business—the more you know, the more is put upon you. *Mrs. Humphry Ward.*

Life is a short day, but it is a working-day; activity may lead to evil, but inactivity can not lead to good. *Hannah More.*

It seems very certain that the world is to grow richer and better in the future, not by the magnificent achievements of the highly gifted few, but by the patient faithfulness of the one-talented many. *Phillips Brooks.*

> His, not mine, are the gifts; and only so far can I make them
> Mine, as, in giving, I add my heart to whatever is given.
> *Longfellow.*

The blacksmith's arm, the scout's eye, the craftsman's delicate finger, the student's intellect, all illustrate the law on its one side; and the dying out of faculties and tastes, and even of intuitions and conscience, by reason of simple disuse, are melancholy instances of it on the other. *Alexander Maclaren.*

Two possessions we shall carry with us into the unseen: they are free of death, and inalienable—one is character, the other is capacity: is this capacity to be consigned to idleness and wantonly wasted? *John Watson.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

For who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? 1 Cor. 4.7.

By the grace of God I am what I am. 1 Cor. 15.10.

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights. Jas. 1.17.

There are diversities of gifts. 1 Cor. 12.4.

To whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required. Luke 12.48.

If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not. 2 Cor. 8.12.

All things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee. 1 Chron. 29.14.

So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Rom. 14.12.

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A PERSONAL THOUGHT

We are God's children, and to us our Father divides His gracious and glorious gifts. To all of us He gives this earth, with its daily miracle of beauty and power; to all of us the sunrise and sunset, the flower and the dew of heaven, the mountains and rivers, the sky and fields. And to you, many special and precious gifts; the golden hours of youth, the inestimable gem of time; to many of you rank and wealth, strength of arm, advantage of position, power of mind. These are God's talents; the inheritance He divides among us at our birth. He gives them to us—for what purpose? To bury, or hide, or squander them in self-seeking, in self-indulgence, for self-glory? Nay, not so! They are His, not ours; given, not earned; nay, rather lent, not given—lent us for His service, to be used for His glory with industry, with love. *F. W. Farrar.*

THE LESSON SUMMARY

With the discourse in the temple Jesus closed His public teaching; with the discourse upon the Mount of Olives, including the parables of the Ten Virgins and the Talents, He closed His private instruction of His disciples, though He continued to exhort and console them, as each night till His arrest He went with them to Bethany.

The Road to Bethany
(Traversed by Jesus each night of Passion Week until His arrest)

Passing from the Parable of the Ten Virgins to that of the Talents, "we pass from the joys of the kingdom and the possibility of missing them, to the serious duties of the kingdom and the great honors and heavy penalties that follow." The kingdom of Heaven is likened to a man who leaves his possessions in the charge of his servants while he goes on a long journey. Upon his return he finds that the one to whom he had given ten talents had traded with them and gained ten more, and the one who received two talents had gained two more. Each of them He praises for their faithfulness, and each of them He promises the same reward. From the wicked and slothful servant who buried in the earth the one talent

intrusted to him, that talent is taken and given to the one who had ten talents. Thus are we taught the principle by which the awards of the Great Judge shall be made. Each one is in partnership with God, each one must render account of his stewardship, to each one opportunities for faithful service are given, and from each one interest is required upon the intrusted capital.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. When men in the Middle Ages gave to a cathedral or a college, when they subscribe largely now to hospitals or missions, doing this and nothing more, they are giving their money to the exchangers. *E. H. Plumptre.*

2. The reward of faithful work is not rest but increased opportunities.

3. Inequalities of fortune and endowment seem, so far as we can see, to be part of God's plan for the benefit of mankind, just as mountains and plains are for the benefit of nature. God has elevated certain tracts of land above the rest, in order that these elevated tracts might bless the lowland tracts, send down to them the rains and dews and streams to water and fertilize the fields, and cause them to produce life and beauty and fruitfulness everywhere. And so, were mankind reduced to one level of condition and endowment, the race would soon perish of pure apathy. There would be nothing to interest men in each other, or to induce them to stimulate one another. God has elevated some nations and individuals above other nations and individuals, giving them exceptional privileges and advantages in order that they might extend these blessings to those beneath them. *Hugh Macmillan.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Review the lesson on the anointing of Jesus at the home of a Pharisee named Simon. (Luke 7.36-50.) 2. Where in Bethany was the supper held? (Matt. 26.6; Mark 14.3; John 12.2.) 3. Who were present at the supper? (John 12.1-4.) 4. What two special reasons had Mary for gratitude? (John 11.2; Luke 10.42.) 5. What are some of the ways in which Christ may be honored? 6. What things make life worth while? 7. What useless gifts are valuable? 8. What had Jesus said about Judas in John 6.70, 71? What does John say about him in 12.6? 9. What was the purchasing power of the amount Judas received for betraying Christ, as given in Ex. 21.32 and Zech. 11.12, 13?

BETWEEN LESSON III AND LESSON IV

See "Between Lesson X and Lesson XI," page 415.

JESUS ANOINTED IN BETHANY

Matt. 26.6-16. (Read Mark 14.1-11; Luke 7.36-50.) Commit vv. 12, 13.

Golden Text

She hath wrought a good work upon me. Matt. 26.10.

Time: Saturday, April 1, A. D. 30.
Place: Bethany. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 88 and 109-111.

LESSON TEXT. MATT. 26.6-16

6 Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper,
7 There came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat *at meat.*
8 But when his disciples saw *it,* they had indignation, saying, To what purpose *is* this waste?
9 For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor.
10 When Jesus understood *it,* he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me.
11 For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always.
12 For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did *it* for my burial.
13 Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, *there* shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.
14 Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests,
15 And said *unto them,* What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.
16 And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

6. *When Jesus was in Bethany.* According to John (12.1) this event took place "six days before the Passover," on Saturday evening before Palm Sunday. Matthew and Mark do not indicate the time, but narrate the incident later, in order, seemingly, to connect Judas' treachery with the event. *Simon the leper,* who had probably been cured by Jesus.

7. *A woman.* Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus. (John 12.3.) Lazarus was present and Martha served. (John 12.2.) *Alabaster box.* A cruse or flask made of alabaster. A pound of ointment of spikenard, says John. *As he sat at meat.* As He reclined at table.

8. *His disciples had indignation.* John says, Then saith one of the disciples, Judas Iscariot.

9. *Might have been sold for much.* A pound was valued at three hundred pence, at least forty-two dollars—it represented a laborer's wages for a whole year. *Schaeffer. Given to the poor.* John adds, This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.

11. *Ye have the poor always with you.* And whensoever ye will ye may do them good. (Mark 14.7.) *Me ye have not always.* This opportunity will never come again.

12. *She did it for my burial.* (See 2 Chron. 16.14.) If Mary was conscious of the meaning of her own act, then her love discovered what the disciples could not perceive; if she was not, then the Lord gives to acts of love a significance beyond the intention. *Schaff.*

One of the Pieces of Silver

13. *Verily.* A solemn affirmation. *This gospel.* The good tidings of salvation, referring especially to His sacrificial death. *For a memorial.* In memory of her. Before John narrates this incident, he describes Mary as "That Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment." John 11.2.

14. *Then.* The time referred to in the first six verses of the chapter, the assembling of the Sanhedrim. The intervening verses are narrated out of order. *Judas Iscariot.* Luke says (22.3): Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot.

15. *Thirty pieces of silver.* Thirty silver shekels, about sixteen dollars and eighty cents, was the price for the life of an ox (Ex. 21.32). It was only a little more than one-third the value of Mary's ointment.

16. *From that time.* Probably Tuesday evening.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

7. *Poured it on his head.* Mary's active faith, fervent love and deep gratitude for the restoration of her brother to life and for her own spiritual life, which the Lord had imparted to her (Luke 10.42), combined to draw from her this expression of her holy sentiments. *Schaeffer.*

Her eyes are homes of silent prayer,
Nor other thought her mind admits
But, he was dead, and there he sits,
And He that brought him back is there.

Then one deep love doth supersede
All other, when her ardent gaze
Roves from the living brother's face,
And rests upon the Life indeed.

All subtle thought, all curious fears,
Borne down by gladness so complete,
She bows, she bathes the Saviour's feet
With costly spikenard and with tears.

Thrice blest whose lives are faithful prayers,
Whose loves in higher love endure;
What souls possess themselves so pure,
Or is there blessedness like theirs?

Tennyson, In Memoriam.

8. *To what purpose is this waste?* The rulers were determining to put Him out of the way, as not only worthless but dangerous; the very man who objected to this present expenditure was making up his mind to sell Him for a small part of this sum; the people were scrutinizing His conduct, criticizing Him—and, in the midst of all this hatred, suspicion, treachery, coldness and hesitation, comes this woman and puts aside all this would-be wisdom and caution, and for herself pronounces that no tribute is rich enough to pay Him. It is the rarity of such action, not the rarity of the nard, that strikes Jesus.

The charge of the Light Brigade at Balaklava served none of the immediate purposes of the battle, and was indeed a blunder and waste from that point of view; yet are not our annals enriched by it as they have been by few victories? *Marcus Dods.*

10. *Why trouble ye the woman?* To be misunderstood even by those one loves is the cross and bitterness of life. It is the secret of that sad and melancholy smile on the lips of great men which so few understand; it is the cruelest trial reserved for self-devotion; it is what must have oftenest wrung the heart of the Son of Man; and if God could suffer, it would be the wound we should ever be inflicting upon Him. He also—He above all—is the great misunderstood, the least comprehended. *Amicl.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

When it is stated that the woman *broke the alabaster box* (Mark 14.3), what was evidently meant is the seal by which the lid was secured, and the perfume prevented from evaporating. We see similar boxes, only made of richly colored glass instead of alabaster, at the present day in the bazaars of Damascus, containing the attar of roses for which that city is celebrated, which are very elaborately sealed. *Tristram.*

12. *She did it for my burial.* If He were to perish by public execution, His body would not be embalmed; funeral honors were not given to those who were put to death, least of all to those who died by stoning. But this woman had embalmed His body beforehand. He thus predicted that His death would shortly occur. *Edmond Stapfer.*

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils.

"Where'er a noble deed is wrought,
Where'er is spoken a noble thought,
Our hearts, in glad surprise,
To higher levels rise.

. . . . . .

"Honor to those whose words or deeds
Thus help us in our daily needs,
And by their overflow
Raise us from what is low."

You all recognize these beautiful words of Longfellow. Our lesson is about a noble deed that comes as a surprise in the sad record of Christ's last week on earth. The doer of the deed received high honor from Christ, Who commanded that it should be told in her memory wherever His words were preached. Who was the greatly honored one? Have you heard of her before?

For Older Pupils. Said an old monk to the artist Wilkie, as he was gazing upon Titian's picture of the Last Supper, "I have sat in sight of that picture nearly threescore years. The visitors have come and looked and wondered and gone their way. My companions have dropped off one by one. But these remain—these painted men. They are the true realities; we are but shadows." Titian perished, but the influence of his works is lasting. Influence is immortal. The anointing of Jesus at Bethany by Mary has been immortalized by the express command of Jesus, and who can say what has been the influence of her deed of love? Because of His valuation of her deed, what countless thoughts have been turned from the appreciation of things seen to that of things unseen!

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. She Hath Wrought a Good Work Upon Me

Christ's Appreciation of Mary's Act. It is only here and there in the Gospels that the sense of the beautiful finds expression in the somber and strenuous life of Jesus, as slanting sunbeams strike through a clouded

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and threatening day; but when these rare flashes of æsthetic pleasure slant through His teaching they illuminate a side of His character which has been from many devout Christians almost concealed. Jesus looks about Him, at the birds of the air and the lilies of the field, and the sheer prodigality and loveliness of their lives make them fit illustrations of the method of God. Jesus sits among the happy guests at a wedding-feast and enters joyously into the festive spirit of the scene. He is called a winebibber and publican because He does not sternly shun occasions of genial hospitality and happy companionship.

More still His appreciation of non-utilitarian expenditure is exhibited in the story of the woman with the box of ointment—a story which fastened upon the minds of those who heard it so strongly that it appears in various connections in all four Gospels. The incident presented a clear issue between the use of money for imaginative symbolism and the use of money for alms-giving. As the woman pours out her prodigal offering it is as if in answer to the deep human demand for the beautiful, the suggestive, the sacrificial; and Jesus greets her gift as He greeted the beauty of the lilies, with their suggestion of that divine completeness which He desired to reveal. "Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, that also which this woman hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her." Here is the charter of all undertakings which propose in the name of Christ to feed the mind, to stir the imagination, to quicken the emotions, to make life less meager, less animal, less dull. *Professor Peabody, in Jesus Christ and the Social Question.*

The Prodigality of Providence. The disciples had forgotten one thing. They had forgotten this woman's wastefulness was the revelation of her love. There is a wastful spending that is supremely selfish. There is a lavish giving that is disowned in Heaven, because the giver is always thinking of himself. But God suspends the petty economies, and will not brook a single murmur, when He detects the wastefulness of love. . . .

God has His own arithmetic, it is not ours. God has His own economy, but it is not the economy of man. The spirit that breathes through universal nature is the spirit that broke the alabaster box. Yon birch could fill with seedlings the whole belt of wood. The sun is shining on dead Sahara as well as on the living world that needs it. There is a royal extravagance in nature.

Beauty unseen by man is wasted. Yet there are scenes of beauty in the tropics on which the eye of man has never lit. And there are countless flushings of the dawn, and glories unnumbered of the setting sun, that never fall within the ken of man. Arctic explorers tell us that in the distant North there is an unsurpassable glory in the sunset. In a brief season in declining day the levels of the snow are touched with gold, and every minaret of ice is radiant. And every sunset has been so for centuries, and never an eye has looked upon it till now. O, seeming

waste of precious beauty! Until heart begins to whisper, "Why, to what purpose this waste!" Ah, it is there! that is the point. We have observed it now in the Creator's work.

If Mary's action was in the line of God's, we shall detect even in Providence something of the prodigality of love. When aged Jacob sat in his tent in Canaan, nursing the hope that Joseph was still living, he would have been content to have had his son again though he came home in rags. And when the prodigal of the parable came home, ashamed of himself, and sorry for his sin, he wished no better chamber than his father's kitchen. But God was lavish in His loving-kindness, and gave a prince and not a beggar back to Jacob. And the father of the prodigal was himself so prodigal of love that he must put a ring upon that truant hand and bind shoes upon those wandering feet. . . .

And when I think of all the gifts of God that seem to be given only to be wasted; of sight that might have seen so much and sees so little, and that little vile; of speech that might have done such noble things, and does so little, and that little mean; of hearing and of memory, of thought and of imagination, lavished so royally on worthless men; then dimly I realize the prodigality of Providence, and feel my hopeless debt, and the hopeless debt of all this fallen world, to the seeming wastefulness of Him who quickened Mary to her wasteful deed. *G. H. Morrison.*

II. She Hath Done What She Could. Mark 14.8

What the Words Mean. We are more apt to see comfort in the words "She hath done what she could," than the solemnity of them. They are a tender recognition, but a tremendous challenge. "What she could" means all she could. The Master compares us, not with others, but with ourselves. There is the mercy. But with our best selves, there is the rub. What I did, subtracted from what I might have done, gives the bad remainder, the immoral debit, the moral discredit. *Maltbie D. Babcock.*

Noble Examples of Those Who Did All They Could. When Spurgeon's Metropolitan Temple was rebuilt at London after the fire, the sum of two hundred thousand dollars was quickly raised that it might be dedicated free of debt. Mrs. Charles Spurgeon, who for twenty-five years had been confined to her bed or an invalid's chair, wished to help and, notwithstanding her physician's disapproval, insisted upon being carried to the platform before the work was finished, there to receive a welcome and contributions from her late husband's people. All delighted to do her honor, and for two hours a great crowd filed past her, till the contributions piled up beside her, most of them in small sums,—the two mites of the donors,—amounted to nearly forty thousand dollars.

One day there were two babes in the garret of a country house near London, whose mother had died. A poor, half-witted, lonely woman came

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and took the babes away, and kept them as her own, though she had only seventy-five cents a week for her support. Four years later the lord of the manor where her humble cottage was, chanced to hear her praying for the two boys. He told her story, and the preachers of England repeated it, and as a result, not only in England but in all Christian lands, Homes and Asylums for little ones have been established.

Rejoicing That Others Can Do More. I used to think I should be thwarted in my desire to do something useful. But I have found out that though the ways in which I can make myself useful are few, yet the work open to me is endless. The gladdest laborer in the vineyard may be a cripple. Darwin could work only half an hour at a time; yet in many diligent half-hours he laid anew the foundations of philosophy. I long to accomplish a great and noble task; but it is my chief duty and joy to accomplish humble tasks as though they were great and noble. It is my service to think how I can best fulfil the demands that each day makes upon me, and to recognize that others can do what I can not. Green, the historian, tells us that the world is moving along, not only by the mighty shoves of its heroes, but also by the aggregate of the tiny pushes of each honest worker; and that thought alone suffices to guide me in this dark world and wide. I love the good that others do; for their activity is an assurance that whether I can help or not, the true and the good will stand sure. *Helen Keller.*

III. She Did It for My Burial

Break the Alabaster Box for the Living. You remember the woman who broke the alabaster box for the head of the Saviour while He was living—that most beautiful of all the appreciations? And you know what we do? Let our fellow beings carry their crosses to their Calvaries, and after each has suffered his agony and entered into his peace, we go out to him and break our alabaster boxes above his stiff cold feet. I have always hoped that my religion might enable me to break my alabaster box for the living who alone can need it—and who always do need it. *James Lane Allen.*

Be merciful, O our God!
Forgive the meanness of our human hearts,
That never till the noble soul departs,
See half the worth, or hear the angels' wings
Till they go rustling heavenward as he springs
Up from the mournèd sod. *Edward Rowland Sill.*

Repair the Wires. The head of a great electrical company said recently, "The chief difficulty we encounter is that of keeping our wires

in repair and in good working order. The motive force at the terminus is easily controlled; it is the defects in communication which impair our work."

To how many relations of life would the same words apply! A man at the head of a great business has capital, intelligence, a thorough knowledge of his trade, and a kindly feeling to his operatives. But he fails to reach or influence them. His manner is harsh, brusk, dogmatic, or timid and cold. His men dislike and distrust him. The wires between them are not in working order.

In how many homes are there coldness and jealousy and alienation between parent and child, or brother and sister, whose hearts are yet full of affection for each other. The love is there deep and warm, but hidden out of sight. No spark passes from one heart to the other, to give out cheer and life. *The Youth's Companion.*

Wires That Were Down. Mr. Newell, the President of the Lake Shore Railroad, was very undemonstrative and stern, a man who worked tremendously hard, and seemed to expect the same of all who were connected with him. When C. P. Leland, the auditor of the road, was stricken with his last illness, Mr. Newell was solicitous about him and visited him often. One morning the sick man is reported to have said to Mr. Newell: "Mr. Newell, I know that the end of my life is very near. The doctors have known it for some time, but they told me of it only to-day. If my work is ended here, I am ready to go, but, before I go, may I ask you just one question? I have held an important position under you for many years. It was a work to which my life has been given, into which my whole heart entered. What I want to ask you is this: In all that work, in those long years of service, has there ever been one thing of which you approve?"

"Leland," answered Mr. Newell, "you know that your work was well done, and that it always met my approval."

"Then why did you not tell me so?"

Mr. Newell took the hand of the dying man and with tears in his eyes said: "I have tried to do these things, but I can not. They will not out. That is the only excuse I have. I thought you knew how your work had always seemed to me. I ought to have told you so. Is it too late that I tell you now?"

Wires That Were Up. In the winter of 1864, an old Quaker lady visited Lincoln at the White House, and took the long-suffering giant's down-stretched hand. She had to rise on tiptoe, and as she did it her sweet voice uttered some words difficult to catch. It is not possible to give the words of either exactly, but this is their purport:

"Yes, friend Abraham, thee need not think thee stands alone. We are all praying for thee. The hearts of all the people are behind thee, and thee can not fall. The Lord has appointed thee, the Lord will sustain thee, and the people love thee. Yea, as no man was ever loved before,

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does this people love thee. Take comfort, friend Abraham. God is with thee. The people are behind thee."

The effect of the words was easy to see. As when the lights suddenly blaze behind a cathedral window, so the radiance illumined those rugged features and poured from the wonderful eyes. The gaunt form straightened. The mouth became beautiful in its sweetness, as it said to her: "You have given a cup of cold water to a very thirsty and grateful man. You have done me a great kindness." *The Youth's Companion.*

Say It Now. There is a world of meaning in James Whitcomb Riley's verse—

"Afterwhile—and one intends
To be gentler to his friends."

"You know," George Eliot says, "I not only like to be loved, but I like to be told that I am loved—the realm of silence is deep enough beyond the grave!"

SENTENCE SERMONS

What's the good of unused good? *The Hayfield Mower.*

Thou art like the spirit which thou comprehendest. *Goethe.*

If we had no failings ourselves, we should not take such pleasure in finding out those of others. *La Rochefoucauld.*

It is not the emotion of admiration we want, but the act of adoration; not the gift, but the giving. *Ruskin.*

A loving heart is more original than the cleverest brains: there is a sort of genius in love for discovering original ways of doing good. *G. H. Knight.*

The lofty nature never is interpreted aright by the nature that is less lofty and magnanimous. *William J. Dawson.*

The mole blames the eagle for soaring, and thinks grubbing and burrowing the only proper mode of action. *Alexander Maclaren.*

When the last hope vanishes, the desperate one seeks revenge and forgets that remorse is sure to come. *Fairbairn.*

The fellowship that does not beget affinity evokes antipathy, the mind that has not learned to love is dangerously near to hate. *Fairbairn.*

If you do not do all you can, how can you prove yourself a Christian? *McCheyne.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land. Deut. 15.11.

Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. John 14.19.

A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity. Prov. 17.17.

Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. 1 Cor. 13.3.

And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity. 1 Cor. 13.13.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Let me, as I sit and listen to His comforting voice, bethink me whether I am doing for Him what might call for a like approval. Can I take gladly all He gives to me, and then, when the next appeal to help comes, grudge Him the smallest token of my thankfulness? As I hear Him say, "She hath done what she could," let me honestly ask, Am I also doing all I can? Am I saying to myself, "If my Lord and Saviour were only here I would lavish on Him all that can show how truly I love Him?" Then let me listen still as He meets that profession of mine, "The poor ye have always with you, and whensoever ye will, ye can do them good; and inasmuch as ye do it to one of the least of these my brethren, ye do it unto me." *G. H. Knight.*

THE LESSON SUMMARY

Our lesson to-day has been called "a lyric prelude to the tragedy of Calvary." True to her character as an expectant listener at her Master's feet, Mary showed her great love to her Teacher and Friend and Saviour by pouring the precious ointment on His head as He reclined in the house of Simon in Bethany. Judas and the other disciples saw in this act only the waste of what might have been sold for much and given to the poor; Christ saw the love that was symbolized by the gift. He reproved the disciples, saying, "Why trouble ye the woman? She hath wrought a good work upon me. For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always. For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her."

In this story, says an English writer, "I can see three things: firstly, love most touchingly symbolized; secondly, love misrepresented and grudged by an unloving heart; and thirdly, love nobly vindicated and immortalized by the Master Himself."

What a contrast between Mary and Judas! Matthew turns from this beautiful scene to record the action of Judas. Going to the chief priests, he agrees with them to betray Jesus for thirty pieces of silver, and from that time sought an easy opportunity for his dark deed. "In Mary and Judas two opposite spirits live," says Doctor Fairbairn. "In the one, a

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love to Christ that seeks to live for Him; in the other, a love to self that means to use rather than serve Him. For Mary to give, for Judas to receive, was to be blessed. To the one, Christ's sufferings were a welcome opportunity for service; to the other, a detested occasion of weakness, an inexplicable and disastrous moment of failure."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The tendency to measure all things from a utilitarian standpoint.
2. There is the possibility of an apostle or an apostate in every one.
3. The character of Judas. Do we judge him by what we know of him, or by what we conceive him to have been? His motives—greed, disappointed ambition, hatred, mistaken idea of the Messiah, or expedient to force Jesus to assume the kingship?

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Who were the disciples mentioned in verses 17 and 19? (Luke 22.8.) 2. How do Mark and Luke designate "such a man," verse 18? (Mark 14.13; Luke 22.10.) 3. What sign did Samuel give to Saul that is recalled by Jesus' direction in Luke 22.10? (1 Sam. 10.3.) 4. What is the meaning of the phrase, "My time is at hand?" 5. What is meant by "remission of sins?" 6. With verse 23 compare Ruth 2.14. What must have been the custom in eating? 7. Read Psalms 113 to 118, which were sung at the paschal meal. 8. How many sacraments did the Lord institute? (Baptism, Lord's Supper.) 9. Look up the meaning and derivation of these words, sacrament, communion, eucharist. 10. Read John 14-17, the farewell discourse of Jesus before He went to the Mount of Olives. 11. Read Mark 14.22-25; Luke 22.19, 20; 1 Cor. 10.16, 17; 11.23-29, as well as Matt. 26.17-30, and write an account of the Last Supper, omitting nothing.

BETWEEN LESSON IV AND LESSON V

Jesus made His Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem the next morning, Sunday, April 2, A. D. 30. Each night until His arrest was spent at Bethany. Monday He returned to Jerusalem and cleansed the temple from the traffic there.

Tuesday the fig-tree, which He had cursed the day before, was found withered as He went to Jerusalem with His disciples. That day He gave the parables of the Two Sons and the Vineyard, the Wicked Husbandman, and the Marriage of the King's Sons; answered the three questions about Tribute, the Resurrection, and the Great Commandment, predicted His death, after the Greeks desired to see Him, predicted the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, and gave His warning about

being ready, with His three parables of the Ten Virgins, the Talents, and the Sheep and the Goats. That same day Judas conspired with the chief priests to betray Jesus. The priests had thought it impossible to take Him during the feast, but the offer of Judas to betray Him for thirty pieces of silver changed their plans, as they now saw that it could be done quietly through Judas without an uproar of the people.

There is no record of any event on Wednesday.

When Thursday came, the disciples made ready for the feast of the Passover as told by Matthew in the first three verses of our next lesson.

Judas Accepting the Silver
(From a painting by H. Prell)

Between verses 20 and 21 the events narrated by Luke and John are to be inserted. "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer," Jesus tells them. After the strife that arose among the disciples as to which one was greatest, Jesus began to wash the disciples' feet. Impulsive Peter exclaimed, "Thou shalt never wash my feet!" but Jesus told him, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." Then came the quick answer, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." He told them that He had given them an example, an example of humility and service. "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." (Luke 22.15-30; John 13.1-20.)

LESSON V—NOVEMBER 4

THE LORD'S SUPPER

Matt. 26.17-30. (Read Mark 14.12-26.) Commit vv. 26, 27.

Golden Text

This do in remembrance of me. 1 Cor. 11.24.

Time: Thursday, April 6, A. D. 30.
Place: Jerusalem. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 86 and 112.

LESSON TEXT. MATT. 26.17-30

17 Now the first *day* of the *feast of* unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?
18 And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples.
19 And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the passover.
20 Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve.
21 And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.
22 And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I?
23 And he answered and said, He that dippeth *his* hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me.
24 The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born.
25 Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said.
26 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed *it*, and brake *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.
27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, Drink ye all of it;
28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.
29 But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.
30 And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

17. *The first day of the feast of unleavened bread.* Thursday, of Holy Week. The sacred season which began on the 14th of Nisan and lasted for seven days, was two feasts rolled into one, the Feast of the Passover, and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and it was called by either one indifferently. *Bruce. Eat the passover.* Partake of the paschal supper.

18. *Go into the city.* To Jerusalem. *To such a man.* There shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water, follow him. (Mark 14.13.) As carrying water was usually the work of women, this was a marked sign. Christ gives neither the man's name, nor the location of his home, evidently intending by this means to keep from Judas the knowledge of the place of meeting, that he might not betray Him at the paschal supper. *My time is at hand.* The time of His death.

19. *The disciples.* Peter and John. (Luke 22.8.) *Appointed.* Directed. *They made ready the passover.* They brought the lamb "roast with fire," the "bitter herbs" (Ex. 12.8), unleavened bread, wine, and all that was needed for the paschal meal. *Schaeffer.*

20. *When the even was come.* Thursday evening after sunset.

22. *Is it I?* The form of the Greek negative implies a negative answer: "Surely it is not I."

23. *He answered.* According to John 13.23-26, His words were spoken to John privately.

24. *Goeth.* To His death. *It had been good for that man.* A proverbial expression for the most terrible destiny, forbidding the thought of any deliverance, however remote. *Schaff.*

25. *Then Judas said.* After the sop Satan entered into him. (John 13.27.) *Thou hast said.* A common way of giving an affirmative answer. John adds, "What thou doest, do quickly." (13.27.)

26. *Jesus took bread.* The bread was unleavened bread, especially prepared for the paschal meal. With this act begins the institution of the Lord's Supper. Neither Matthew nor Mark says that it was established as a permanent institution, but Paul records Christ's words, "This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me," and adds, "For as often as ye eat the bread, and drink the cup, ye do show forth the Lord's death till he come." (1 Cor. 25.26. See Acts 2.42; 20.7.) *Blessed it.* "Blessed be he who giveth the bread of earth," is said to have been the usual blessing. Luke says "gave thanks." From this the word *Eucharist* (Thanksgiving) has become a common name of the Lord's Supper. *Brake it.* This has led to calling the ordinance of the Lord's Supper the *"Breaking of Bread." Communion.* Another name for the Sacrament, is derived from 1 Cor. 10.16. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?" The word translated *communion* here, really means *participation. This is my body.*

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This is neuter, while the masculine word would be needed to agree with *bread;* it means, this object represents my body. *Broadus.*

27. *Drink ye all of it. All ye,* as the Greek shows, not *all of it.*

28. *This is my blood.* The wine in the cup represents my blood. *Of the new testament.* As Moses (Ex. 24.8) sprinkled blood upon the people and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, our Lord points directly to the shedding of His blood on the cross as "the blood of the covenant." He thus comforted His disciples by explaining His death to them. *Schaff. Which is shed for many for the remission of sins.* A statement of the sacrificial nature of His death. *Remission.* Pardoning.

29. *That day.* After judgment has been held and the world has passed away. *Schaeffer. In my Father's kingdom.* The kingdom of God, completed and perfected. *Plumptre.*

30. *They went out.* Before leaving the house and the city, Jesus gave the farewell discourse preserved in John 14, 15, 16, 17. *Into the Mount of Olives.* To Gethsemane.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

21. *One of you shall betray me.* The four Evangelists are entirely independent in their accounts of the Last Supper. Luke (17.15-18) records the expression of our Lord's desire to eat the Passover with them; and this seems to have been the first incident attending the first cup (the announcement of the feast); the washing of the disciples' feet is mentioned by John only (13.4-12), and this preceded the announcement of the betrayer (John 13.2-30), which verse 21 of Matthew narrates. The strife as to who should be greatest, mentioned by Luke only (22.21-30), seems to have been the immediate occasion of the washing of the disciples' feet; hence the probable order was: (1) the expression of desire; (2) this strife; (3) the washing of the disciples' feet; (4) the announcement that one should betray Him, mentioned by all four Evangelists. *Philip Schaff.*

25. *Judas, which betrayed him.* Did Christ know from the beginning that Judas would betray Him, and yet, so knowing, did He choose him to be one of the disciples? Here we can only answer by indicating this as a canon in studying the life on earth of the God-Man, that it was part of His self-exinanition—of that emptying Himself, and taking upon Him the form of a servant—voluntarily to forego His divine knowledge in the choice of His human actions. So only could He, as perfect man, have perfectly obeyed the divine law. For, if the divine had determined Him in the choice of His actions there could have been no merit attaching to His obedience, nor could He be said to have, as perfect Man, taken our place, and to have obeyed the Law in our stead and as our Representative, nor yet be our Ensample. *Alfred Edersheim.*

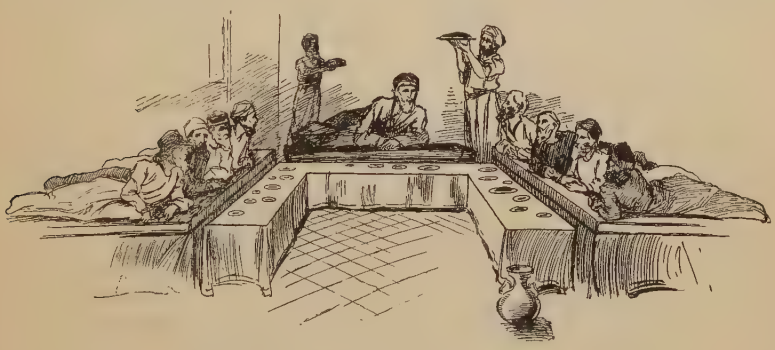
28. *Shed for the remission of sins.* In what sense is the blood of Christ

shed for the remission of sins? Our salvation depends not on our understanding how the death of Christ takes away sin, but upon our believing that it does so. We do not understand the methods of cure prescribed by the physicians, nor could we give a rational account of the efficiency of our medicines, but this does not retard our cure if only we use them. . . . Not by intellect, but by will are we led to God. Not by what we know, but by what we desire, is our destiny determined. *Marcus Dods.*

30. *A hymn.* We learn from the Talmud that the Jews were accustomed in connection with the paschal meal to sing Psalms 113 to 118, called "The Great Hallel" (praise). The Hebrew *Hallelujah* signifies *Praise ye Jehovah.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

18. *At thy house.* Free-hearted hospitality reigned in Jerusalem during the Passover. It is said that a curtain was hung in front of a door to make known that there was still room within for guests. More than one company often ate the Paschal Supper in the same apartment. Men, women, and children partook of the supper. "Though each company



At Table

might not consist of less than ten," says Edersheim in *The Temple and Its Services,* "it was not to be larger than that each should be able to partake of the Paschal Lamb—and we know how small lambs are in the East. Christ would eat the Passover alone with His disciples." The tradition is that this apartment selected was the one where the disciples afterwards were assembled on the Day of Pentecost.

20. *He reclined at supper.* We are all familiar with copies of Leonardo da Vinci's famous picture of the Last Supper. The artist's scene represents the moment when Christ has said, "One of you shall betray me." A beautiful resignation is shown in the face of Christ, while dismay is

depicted upon the faces of the assembled disciples, as each one looks into the face of another. We must not think, however, of a table and seats such as the artist has pictured, but of a low eastern table with couches on which all reclined. The Talmud says that because slaves were accustomed to eat standing, the reclining at the Paschal Supper indicated that the Israelites had passed out of bondage.

23. *He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish.* It will be remembered that knives and forks and spoons were not in use.

"There were probably a number of dishes or bowls," says Doctor Riddle, "distributed along the table, containing the broth called *charoseth,* prepared of dates, figs, etc., which was used at the supper, representing by its color the Egyptian bricks or clay."

"It is hard for us to realize the infamy of one, according to oriental standards, who would betray a man with whom he had eaten. An oriental host was entertaining a traveler. He said, 'When we wish to honor a guest we do this,' and he detached a piece of roast mutton with his fingers and passed it to his guest, who took it with his fingers and ate it. The host said, 'Do you know what I have done?' 'You have given me a delicious piece of roast meat and I have eaten it.' 'Much more than that. By this act I have pledged you every drop of my blood, that while you are in my territory no evil shall come to you.'" *Ewing.*

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. "There is in Cornwall a grey old ruin called King Arthur's Castle," says Samuel Gregory. "Some very curious stories are told about King Arthur's knights. The best known of those stories is that of 'The Holy Grail.' People said that after Jesus had partaken of the Last Supper the cup, out of which He drank, was kept by Joseph of Arimathæa. Somehow the cup came to England. It was a holy and wonderful thing, and did great miracles. But men grew wicked, and because of their wickedness the cup or 'grail,' as it was called, became invisible. It was lost. So King Arthur's knights went here and there searching for the Holy Grail. Of course there never was any Holy Grail to find. It is a fairy tale, and means that there are holy things which you can not see with your eyes. To wicked people holy things are invisible." Our lesson to-day is about the Last Supper of Jesus and the disciples at Jerusalem. You will see that Jesus spoke there of holy and invisible things.

For Older Pupils. In the lesson for last Sunday, Jesus desired that Mary's deed should be always kept in remembrance; in to-day's lesson He desired that He Himself should always be remembered. He appointed a symbolic act as a reminder to Christians of their duties and privileges. "This do in remembrance of me." While the priests were laying their infamous plans, He instituted the memorial supper.

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

The Meaning of the Sacrament. The word *sacrament* does not occur in the Bible. It is the old Latin word *sacramentum,* which expresses the oath of the soldier in the Roman army, by which he swore allegiance to Cæsar, declaring himself willing to go anywhere, to do anything and to die if necessary for the Emperor. And this sacramental service is really a renewal of the military oath of obedience and loyalty in which we declare that we will obey our Commander-in-chief, individually and collectively, at all hazards. *Hugh Price Hughes.*

Take, Eat. I am the bread of life. Except a man eat my flesh and drink my blood, he hath no life in him, said Jesus. It makes all the difference in the world whether you are or are not feeding day by day on the bread of life.

Sometimes a general is said to inspirit his soldiers, that is to say, he puts his own spirit into them. He has courage and strength and hope, and they come under their spell and influence and they have courage and strength and hope, too. There is an analogy between earthly things here also and divine things. That is the way Christ in His spirit influences and helps us. But what is the condition we must comply with on our part? If you want to be helped by men and inspired by men you must put yourselves under their influence. It is so in regard to our relations to Jesus Christ. *Arnold Thomas.*

This Do in Remembrance of Me. Christ knew well that when He was departed, this act, and the words that accompanied it, would be a sure means of evoking His figure in their sad meetings. And the provision was realized. Each time in their immense sorrow, that they assembled to break bread in memory of Him, they felt Him to be in their midst.

I think that all wounded hearts should follow such a Christ. Have you lost a loved one? Do something in memory of him—or her. And above all, love one another in memory of her—of him.

Those who sleep have left a work. Their hands are folded, their work is unfinished. Would you feel indeed near them, feel yourself in accord with them? Do in remembrance of them what you know they loved to do. . . .

Let us keep the solidarity of those who are gone with those who remain. Let us do works of disinterested goodness, in memory of the dear ones who have taken their flight. Life will gain thereby in warmth and mutual goodness. It will, moreover, gain in depth, brightness, and power. And the habit of living with those who have crossed the passage of death will make it more familiar to us. They have passed that way, they have prepared the way for us. *Charles Wagner.*

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II. Is It I?

Who Are We That We Should Condemn Others? If we are honest with ourselves, we realize that we can not know the possibilities for evil within ourselves till we are tested. "The soul, tested by temptations, is like iron tried by weights," says F. W. Robertson. "No iron bar is absolutely infrangible. Its strength is tested by the weight which it bears without breaking. No soul is absolutely impeccable. It seems as if all we can dare to ask even of the holiest is how much temptation he can bear without giving way."

"For more than a year"—so speaks Goethe in the *Confessions of a Beautiful Soul*—"I was forced to feel that if an unseen Hand had not protected me, I might have become a Girard, a Cartouche, a Damiens, or almost any moral monster that I can name. I felt the predisposition to it in my heart. What a discovery!"

Well known is the remark of John Bunyan, on looking from his window and seeing a malefactor being led to his execution—"There goes John Bunyan, but for the grace of God."

"It is those who are the truest and the noblest, who have learned themselves best, that are the readiest to acknowledge the possibilities for evil in their hearts," says Doctor G. Campbell Morgan. "When I began preaching some twenty-six or seven years ago, I had a sermon on Judas. Oh, the scathing things I said in that sermon about Judas; the denunciations —I wouldn't preach it now if you paid me to. Do not misunderstand me. I do not think Judas any the less a traitor, nothing shall ever redeem him; but I find in this life of mine was the making of a traitor, it may be the giving of a traitor's kiss, so that when I was hard and heavy on certain forms of sin, lo and behold, it was but just that the scathing, denunciatory fires should burn in me, too."

Where Thou Art Strongest, Watch. Who above all patriarchs and prophets was noted for his meekness? Was it not Moses? Yet it was Moses who brake the tables in a passion, and failed in the grace that most distinguished him. Whom do we call the father of the faithful? Is it not Abraham? Yet the worst sin in Abraham's life sprang out of want of faith. The patient Job sinned through impatience, and the brave Peter fell through cowardice. The gentle and most tolerant St. John, in that one hour when he would have the fire on the Samaritan villagers, was like to be the most intolerant of all.

O friend, remember that where thou art strongest, watch! Where thou art best and bravest, be on thy guard! The choicest gifts that God has dowered you with may be your snare, and all that is best in you may be your ruin. Yon victim of intemperance might have been a happy man to-day but for the kindly heart and splendid fellowship that made him the darling of the social company. It was the best in him that gave a standing-ground for Satan. *G. H. Morrison.*

III. The Crime of Judas

The Cause of the Crime. The popular view is that Judas was moved by greed, love of money, to his dastardly deed. This does not seem probable, as his position as keeper of the funds was worth more to him than the few pieces of silver. The ointment that Mary used was valued at two and a half times as much, and probably such gifts came into his keeping, and he could help himself.

Another theory, that of Archbishop Whately, is that Judas sought to give Jesus an opportunity to show His power and escape from His enemies. In that case, Jesus had not said, "It had been good for that man, if he had not been born." The same condemnation of Jesus is too strong, if, as De Quincy suggested, Judas' sin was merely that of presumption, a desire to force Jesus to proclaim Himself king.

Professor Fairbairn says the betrayal was due to disappointment. His hopes gone, his loyalty turned to hatred, and hatred led to revenge through treachery.

Doctor W. Boyd Carpenter maintains that Judas joined the cause of Christ through self-interest, expecting that Christ would become the earthly king, then, fearing he had made a mistake, he sought to secure his own interests no matter what happened. The cause of Christ may triumph, but, on the other hand, it may be the priestly party that will win. He arranges matters so as to be safe with either side. He does not break with the disciples. He attempts to appear to our Lord as on His side, and to the priestly party as on their side. His Master is condemned; all hope in that direction disappears. "He has, however, the other side to depend on. He visits the priests and, with an affectation of misgiving, expresses doubts concerning his own action. Does he think that they will pamper and coax him, laugh at his misgivings, and belaud him as a patriot who has deserved well of the powers that be? He is quickly undeceived. In the eyes of the priests he is a paid spy, and nothing more. The scales fall from his eyes. He has sacrificed place, credit, character, friends, and for what? He has played a game, and by his calculations he stood to win either way, but he has lost. . . . He departed and went and hanged himself."

The Treachery. If we ask what precisely it was in the crime of Judas that makes us so abhor it, manifestly its most hateful ingredient was its treachery. "It was not an enemy that reproached me, then I could have borne it; but it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance."

Cæsar defended himself till the dagger of a friend pierced him; then in indignant grief he covered his head with his mantle, and accepted his fate.

One can forgive the open blow of a declared enemy. . . . One can forgive the Pharisees who knew not what they did, and were throughout

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the declared opponents of Christ; but Judas attached himself to Christ, knew that His life was one of unmixed benevolence, was conscious that Christ would have given up everything to serve him, felt moved and proud from time to time by the fact that Christ loved him, and yet at the last used all those privileges of friendship against his Friend. *Marcus Dods.*

A Sin against Privilege. If ever a man had a chance of becoming a saint, that man was Judas. For two years, at least, this man lived with Christ. He was privileged to listen to Christ's wonderful words, to behold His marvelous deeds, and to witness His beautiful life. Never in all the world's history was there a man who had a better chance than Judas! We are told in these days that what a man becomes depends largely upon his surroundings. According to that theory, Judas, living for two years in closest intimacy with the one sinless and perfect Being who ever walked earth, ought to have grown daily better and nobler and holier.

"Then," says Bunyan in his Dream, "I saw that there was a way to Hell even from the gates of Heaven." *W. Boyd Carpenter.*

His Life a Warning to Us. We are accustomed to think of Judas as almost outside the pale of sympathy. Dante puts him alone in hell, shunned and loathed even there. But he was no monster, and he became what he was, and did what he did, by yielding to ordinary temptations and ordinary motives. What his motives may have been is a problem. He was with Jesus Christ, and was not made better thereby; therefore he was made worse. He companied with the Teacher and Lover of souls; and he did not learn the teaching or accept the love, and therefore he hated Him that gave them both. As for his guilt, it is in better hands than ours. As for his fate, we had better imitate the reticence of the apostle who said: He went to his own place; that place that he was fit for, wherever that was. As for his growth in sin, let us remember that he reached the goal by a path that we may all take, and that it culminated when he did what we may all do, accepted the token of Christ's love, and rejected the love that gave the token. *Alexander Maclaren.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

"Remembering Jesus" is the end; "Doing this" is the means. *George D. Boardman.*

In every human soul is the consciousness that the deed is one's own—the responsibility, and the power to act differently. *E. E. White.*

He who feeds on Christ becomes Christ-like, as the silkworm takes the hue of the leaves on which it browses. *Alexander Maclaren.*

The Holy Communion stands as a symbol and witness of the divinest truth of Christianity—a living Christ in the hearts of living men. *Abbott.*

Vesuvius was quiet for centuries, and trees grew and cattle fed in the crater: who knows what combustibles lie inert in the caves of their own hearts? *Alexander Maclaren.*

Here we receive a new opportunity: in the presence of our Master's perfect sacrifice, by the symbols of His passion and death, we are called to give ourselves once more to God. *George Adam Smith.*

My praise can only breathe itself in prayer;
My prayer can only lose itself in Thee.
Dwell Thou forever in my heart and there,
Lord, I shall sup with Thee and Thou with me.
Edward Henry Bickersteth.

If we show the Lord's death at communion, we must show the Lord's life in the world: if it is a Eucharist on Sunday, it must prove on Monday that it also was a Sacrament. *Maltbie D. Babcock.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me. Psa. 41.9.

Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. Acts 2.23.

The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin. 1 John 1.7.

For without shedding of blood is no remission. Heb. 9.22.

For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come. 1 Cor. 11.26.

Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Matt. 3.15.

Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. 1 Cor. 10, 12.

And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you. John 16.22.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

You say, Why should I take my place in the visible church? What have I to do with baptism, communion? It ought to make you solemn when you remember how earnestly, how lovingly, in the very last moments of His precious life, your Lord commanded you to do what you have never done. It ought to stir your conscience when you see this world, which needs your Christian influence, robbed of it by your silence. *Phillips Brooks.*

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THE LESSON SUMMARY

There are four scenes in our lesson. In the first scene Jesus and His disciples are probably at Bethany, when Peter and John come to Him and ask where He would have them prepare to eat the Passover. Jesus did not give them a direct answer; instead, He said, "Go into the city to such a man—a man bearing a pitcher of water—and say unto him, My Master will keep the passover at thy house." Jesus would not have Judas learn beforehand the place of meeting, for He would not be interrupted at the feast.

The second scene is in that upper room a Jerusalem, at the Passover feast. "Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me," suddenly exclaimed Christ. "Lord, is it I?" each disciple asked, as he looked around in amazement. "He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me," answered Jesus. Judas, too, asked, "Master, is it I?" "Thou hast said." In an aside to John, who was next his Master, Jesus further said, "He it is, for whom I shall dip the sop, and give it him." To Judas He gave the sop, saying to him in a low voice, "What thou doest, do quickly." And Judas straightway went out into the dark night to do his dark deed.

The third scene changes from the paschal feast to the institution of the Lord's Supper. Jesus took bread and gave thanks and said, "Take, eat; this is my body, which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me." And He took the cup and gave it to them as His blood shed for the remission of sins.

After a long farewell conversation, and a final intercessory prayer, the scene changes to the sad journey across the brook Kedron, and along the slope of the Mount of Olives to the Garden of Gethsemane.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. In what respects was Judas less guilty than Pilate? In what respects was he more guilty?

2. Evil doing does not pay, it is not remunerative from a worldly point of view. This appears from the reception accorded Judas Iscariot by the Jewish churchmen when he confessed his crime and returned the silver. Their reply was not encouraging: "What is that to us? See thou to that." Of its kind, there is no finer stroke in the Bible. It hits off to a hair the man of hard, brutal fiber, and is a capital illustration of the "brutality of fact." The priests had gotten all out of Judas they wanted, now he must shift for himself. *John Sparhawk Jones.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. What were some of the occasions when we are told that Jesus

prayed? (Luke 3.21; 6.12; 9.18, 28; Matt. 14.23; John 6.15.) 2. Name the disciples who were told in the 36th verse to "Sit here." 3. Why did Jesus wish to have the three disciples near Him? 4. On what two other occasions were Peter and James and John the only disciples that Jesus took with Him? 5. What was the "cup" of verse 39? 6. What was the "hour" of verse 45? 7. What verse recalls the Lord's Prayer? (41.) 8. Read Christ's victory in Hebrews 5.7-10.

BETWEEN LESSON V AND LESSON VI

After the singing of the hymn (verse 30), Jesus said to His disciples, "All ye shall be offended because of me this night." "Though all men shall be offended because of thee," returned Peter, "yet will I never be offended." "Verily I say unto thee, that this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice." But Peter and all the disciples said, "Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee."

As a warning to them that a time of great danger was coming, Jesus further said, When I sent you before this on your mission, you had neither purse nor scrip nor shoes, but now take all these things, and let him that hath no sword buy one. And they said, evidently mistaking the warning as for the present moment, "Lord, behold here are two swords." And He said unto them, "It is enough."

Jesus now gave His farewell discourse and intercessory prayer, the beautiful words of John 14, 15, 16, and 17. He emphasized the thought that the separation was to be brief; they who knew Him knew the Father; He will send them another Helper, the Spirit of Truth.

"Arise, let us go hence," He said, and then continuing told them the parable of the Vine and the Branches, warned them that they must expect hatred and that His departure was at hand, and assured them of the Father's love. "This is my commandment ('my Sermon on the Mount in brief'), that ye love one another as I have loved you." . . . "It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you." . . . "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

Lifting up His eyes to Heaven, Jesus prayed, "I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. . . . Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me. . . . I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil. . . . Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word."

"When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Kedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples." (Matt. 26.31-35; Mark 14.27-31; Luke 22.31-39; John 13.31-38; 14; 15; 16; 17.)

JESUS IN GETHSEMANE

Matt. 26.36-50. (Read Mark 14.32-52; Luke 22.39-53.) Commit vv. 38, 39.

Golden Text

Not my will but thine be done. Luke 22.42.

Time: Thursday night, April 6, A. D. 30.

Place: Garden of Gethsemane. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 88 and 113-115.

LESSON TEXT. MATT. 26.36-50

36 Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.

37 And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy.

38 Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.

39 And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou *wilt*.

40 And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour?

41 Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak.

42 He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.

43 And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy.

44 And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.

45 Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take *your* rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

46 Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me.

47 And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people.

48 Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he: hold him fast.

49 And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, master; and kissed him.

50 And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took him.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

36. *A place,* R. V., margin, *an enclosed piece of ground. While I go and pray yonder.* Probably out of the moonlight (the passover was at full moon). Our Lord speaks of the coming struggle as prayer. So Abraham (Gen. 22.5) when he, almost on the same spot, was going to the greatest trial of his faith. *Schaff.*

37. *Very heavy,* R. V., *sore troubled.*

38. *Even unto death.* See Luke 22.44. *Watch with me.* At the same time as I watch. Perhaps to guard against intrusion, perhaps for the sake of knowing sympathizing friends were near.

39. *He went a little farther.* About a stone's cast. (Luke 22.41.) *If it be possible.* If consistent with the Father's purpose of saving men. *Broadus. This cup.* A common image for suffering. All His sufferings, including the specific sorrow of that hour. *Schaff. Pass from me.* God answered the prayer by giving Him strength to drink it. *Schaff. Not as I will, but as thou wilt.* As the God-man He foreknew all the bitterness of the cup, and His human will desired relief, but that will was overruled by the divine purpose, which coincided with His Father's will and led to submission. *Schaff.*

40. *Saith unto Peter.* Peter had promised most. (See verse 33.) *What.* It is hardly possible to convey the exact force of the Greek αὕτως, *thus,* or *so.* The idea is, are ye *thus* unable, or *so* utterly unable to watch? *Vincent.*

41. *The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.* There is a tenderness in the warning which is very noticeable. The Master recognizes the element of good, their readiness to go with Him to prison or to death, in their higher nature. But the spirit and the flesh are contrary the one to the other (Gal. 5.17); and therefore they could not do the things that they would, without a higher strength than their own. (Rom. 7.18-22.) *Plumptre.*

42. Although the form is nearly the same, the increasing resignation is indicated.

45. *Sleep on now, and take your rest.* This is probably to be understood literally. There was a short interval still before the apprehension and the subsequent events. *Williams.* Not ironical or reproachful; not yet seriously meant, but concessive—ye may sleep and rest indefinitely, so far as I am concerned; I need no longer your watchful interest. The Master's time of weakness is past; He is prepared to face the worst. *Bruce.* The original term here rendered *now* has also the meaning of *henceforth* or *afterward.* It is so translated in 2 Tim. 4.8; Heb. 10.13; Gal. 6.17; and thus rendered here the passage would be plain and reasonable. Sleep afterward and take your rest; but now, Rise, let us be going. *Preacher's Magazine.*

46. *Let us be going.* To meet Judas.

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47. *Staves, rods, clubs.* They had also lanterns and torches (John 18.3) for use in case Jesus should hide in the valley near by. The priests expected Him to act as they would act in His place.

48. *A sign.* A private signal agreed on. (Mark 14.44.)

50. *Wherefore art thou come?* R. V., *Do that for which thou art come.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

36. *A place called Gethsemane.* The word *Gethsemane* means *oil-press.* In the garden now called Gethsemane there are eight olive trees for which a special tax has been paid since the year A. D. 636. During the siege of Jerusalem, Titus had all the trees round about cut down, hence these ancient trees can not date back to the time of Christ.

41. *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.* Shakespeare, in the tragedy of *Macbeth,* has given us the most graphic representation of the fact that the evil must be within before the temptation from without can have its opportunity. That which tempts Macbeth to his undoing, because ambition burns in his soul, does not tempt Banquo. Always, with every one of us, the danger is within more than without. In every life there is some one tendency which is dark and masterful.

Generally speaking, a fortress is most easily assailable at some particular point. Three sides of it may be impregnable, but a fourth side may need guarding. It is on that side that a commander puts a watch. There is the sentry-box. There is the armed man pacing up and down, on the lookout. There is a side of our nature on which we are weak. Every one of us ought to be sufficiently intimate with ourselves to know what it is among the evil things of life which is most dangerous in its fascinations for us. Do we not recognize the temptations of others? That one who thinks he is not temptable, and need not watch against any form of assault, is like a man walking on thin ice with his eyes shut. *Reuen Thomas.*

41. *But the flesh is weak.* No one was ever so perfect as He in holiness, and hatred of sin, and absolute conformity to the law of God; and yet no one was ever so patient and forbearing with the imperfect, or so persistent in the exercise of a love which ever led on to sympathy with the weak and the fallen and to seek to save the lost. *W. Poole Balfern.*

46. *Let us be going.*

Into the woods my Master went
Clean forspent, forspent,
Into the woods my Master came,
Forspent with love and shame.
. . . . . .

Out of the woods my Master went,
And He was well content.
Out of the woods my Master came,
Content with death and shame. *Sidney Lanier.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

36. *Gethsemane.* An Eastern garden differs from ours in that it is chiefly filled with fruit-trees and fragrant shrubs, rather than with

In the Garden of Gethsemane

flower-beds; and shade, not order or bright colors, is what is chiefly studied in its construction. *Tristram.*

47. *From the chief priests.* According to whose official direction the band of armed men had acted. There was a temple guard, consisting of Levites, regularly maintained in the city, which was, with the officers, subject to the orders of the high priest. The mention of swords in addition to staves, and the occurrence of the Greek military terms "band" and

"captain" seems to indicate that a troop of soldiers, sent forth by Pilate at the request of the Jews, constituted a part of this multitude. *Schaeffer.*

49. *Judas kissed him.* If they are old friends, or of rank nearly equal, they embrace upon meeting, each placing the right hand upon the other's left shoulder, and kissing on the right cheek, then putting the left hand on the other's right shoulder, and kissing him on the left cheek. Thus did Judas kiss our Lord. *Van Lennep, Bible Lands.*

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. The story is told of a minister who was busily preparing his sermon, when his little boy came in to show him he had hurt his finger. The interruption came at the wrong time, and the father said rather impatiently, "I can not help it, sonny." The little fellow turned to go out, and said in a low voice, "Yes, you could; you might have said 'Oh!'"

It always helps to have some one say "Oh!" when we have hurt ourselves. We want some one to sympathize with us in our troubles. When Jesus had gone with His little company of eleven disciples that last Thursday night, after His talk with them in the Upper Room, to the Garden of Gethsemane, He wished to have three of His disciples nearer Him than the rest. He felt the need of sympathy in a time of great trial. Who were the three best loved disciples?

For Older Pupils. Jesus, full of great thoughts and emotions that had at once created the Supper and been created by it, passed with His disciples out into the cool night air. The city was asleep. All was still, save for here the sigh of a weary pilgrim resting uneasily on his mat, there the quick footfall of a wanderer hastening to his home, or the measured tramp of the sentinel walking his rounds. They issued out of the gate that looked toward Olivet, crossed the Kedron, and were soon hidden in an olive grove. There is an awful silence in a sleeping wood, but never did the silence speak to a heart so still in its agony as the one that was then seeking in Gethsemane a place of seclusion and prayer. *Fairbairn's Studies.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. The Reason for the Agony in Gethsemane

Sensitiveness an Element in Courage. Men saw Jesus stand on the hill at Nazareth among a crowd of hooting enemies. They saw Him stand calmly in a boat on the stormy midnight lake and never tremble. They saw Him face the gibbering maniac among the tombs. They saw Him set His face toward Jerusalem and go up thither quietly, knowing that there He would be crucified. They said to one another,

"See how brave He is. He does not know anything like fear. Behold, what manliness!" And then, full of this enthusiasm, some of them witnessed Gethsemane. They heard Him pray to be released from the approaching pain. They watched Him in the days before Gethsemane, as the horror of the coming death gathered around him. "Father, save me from this hour," they heard Him cry. It is impossible not to believe that their conception of manliness underwent first a shock and then an enlargement, as their Master showed them that sensitiveness to pain is a true and necessary element in the loftiest courage. *Phillips Brooks.*

The Woes and Wrongs of the World. There was a moment in Gethsemane when all the woes and wrongs of the weary multitudes, going struggling, floundering, falling through the wilderness, seemed to pass over Him, and earth's sorrows surged through His heart with all the might of a pitiless storm. *Newell Dwight Hillis.*

The Lord's agony had no connection with the natural dread of suffering or painful death; for that dread many martyrs of both sexes, when put to the rack or cast into the fire, have overcome. Neither did it proceed from any consciousness of bearing the Father's wrath as if He were personally guilty, for, on the contrary, He was always conscious of His Father's love (John 10.7). The Saviour endured a struggle in Gethsemane of unusual intensity and anguish which no mortal can understand. . . . The awful struggle must have consisted in part in some powerful temptation, the nature of which is not revealed, or else in an agonizing feeling of the accumulated weight of all the sin of the world which His vicarious sufferings and death were intended to expiate (John 1.29). *Schaeffer.*

Hast thou been tempted to think superficially or lightly of the penalty of sin, or the dread punishment it entails? If so, stand by the side of thy Lord in the dread Gethsemane of His grief, and as you witness the bloody sweat and hear by faith His cries upon the earth, study the meaning of those inspired words which describe His sorrow even unto death, and thou wilt not only see that sin is an infinite evil, but also that in the punishment attached to it there are depths of suffering only to be grasped by Him Who expiated its penalty with His own blood. *W. P. Balfern.*

Other Opinions. Into this hour were crowded by prevision the combined horrors of the passion, its cruelty, its shame, its physical torment, its spiritual tortures. *Lyman Abbott.*

Jesus was in the prime of manhood: life was just opening before Him; His soul was eager for His work, and conscious of rare capability to perform it; His death was the end of all human hope of achievement. *Lyman Abbott.*

The great horror of Jesus in the Garden arose not from fear of Calvary, but from fear of failure through physical suffering to reach Calvary, and so lose all for which He left Heaven. *A. T. Schauffler.*

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As death drew near and the horrors of desertion and betrayal, injustice and hatred, with which it was to be accompanied, began to accumulate before His eyes, as human sin, directed against Himself, disclosed its uttermost malignity and hideousness; and as the iron of His position, in the character of Representative before God of this guilty humanity, entered into His soul, the darkness enveloping His mind intensified, till the sense of it grew to be an agony. *James Stalker.*

II. The Need of Sympathetic Friends

Christ's Need. I think there is something profoundly touching in this trait of Jesus' character—that He always, in every experience of the highest joy or the deepest sorrow, in the death chamber of Jairus' daughter, at the grave of Lazarus, in the Garden of Gethsemane, and on the Mount of Transfiguration, wished to have within call of His voice, and within reach of His hand, some friend whom He knew and trusted, some one who could give Him a sense of human sympathy. That is a chilly and frost-bound disposition which prefers to enjoy its happiness or bear its grief alone. The presence of a friend who can bear with us, even though imperfectly, the mere silent presence of a friend, even though he be asleep, as the friends of Jesus were, is something which enhances pleasure and mitigates sorrow in every true and noble heart. *Henry van Dyke.*

Greatness is sensitiveness. It is the fortune of the creative intellect that it works only in an atmosphere of sympathy. For it, hatred is poison and distrust paralysis. By so much, therefore, as Jesus Christ surpassed other men in His mental gifts, by that much did He crave the sympathy and love of His brother man. *Newell Dwight Hillis.*

Every One's Need. No man in the world is entirely sufficient unto himself; he was not meant to be so. He was made for fellowship and sympathy. We need appreciation. We need the reassuring touch of a true sympathy. That sort of faith in ourselves which is essential to true courage often is dependent upon the faith of others in us. Often he who has most courage, and most strength to stand alone, has the deepest craving for appreciation. *Philip Stafford Moxom.*

"What is the secret of your life?" asked Mrs. Browning of Charles Kingsley. "Tell me, that I may make mine beautiful, too." "I had a friend," was the answer.

Each Heart Knoweth Its Own Bitterness

They said of her, "She never could have felt
The sorrows that our deeper natures feel;"
They said: "Her placid lips have never spelt
Hard lessons taught by pain: her eyes reveal
No passionate yearning, no perplexed appeal

To other eyes. Life and her heart have dealt
With her but lightly."
—When the Pilgrims dwelt
First on these shores, lest savage hands should steal
To precious graves with desecrating tread,
The burial-field was with the plowshare crossed,
And there the maize her silken tresses tossed.
With thanks these Pilgrims ate their bitter bread,
While peaceful harvests hid what they had lost.
—What if her smiles concealed from you her dead?

Lucy Larcom.

Old Falka and the Baby. *The Youth's Companion* tells a touching story about an old Polish woman who had survived all her friends in America, and was a town charge. She had never learned English, and there were no others in the village who spoke her language. She noticed very little, for her world had come to be no longer the world in which she really lived, but she talked constantly to herself, repeating the same phrases over and over. One day the baby girl in the farm-house stumbled and caught at the old woman's knee for support, then held herself erect a few moments and spoke to her in Polish. She only repeated, of course, something she had heard; what it meant only Falka knew. But what it meant that she should be spoken to in her own tongue was plain to be seen. Tears poured down her cheeks, she clasped her hands, rocked to and fro, and uttered pitiful, soft little cries of joy and astonishment. Then she tried with trembling eagerness to coax back the baby girl her emotion had frightened away.

After that, Falka had friends. The story flew about the town. People came to see her, to nod and smile at her, and to let her teach them, with brightening eyes, and sweet, high voice, a word of greeting in the language she loved. The baby will soon forget her Polish now that Falka is gone, but no one who ever saw them together will forget old Falka and the baby.

III. Thy Will Be Done

A Beautiful Resignation. In a short story entitled *An Angel in the House,* in *Harper's Magazine,* Harriet Prescott Spofford tells about a woman who suddenly became blind in her old age. Quickly her prayer came, "Oh, our Heavenly Father, come to us with thy Spirit. Help us to be willin'. Be with us in the dark;—oh, be with us in the dark!"

With her husband, whose heart is breaking under the affliction, she visits the oculist, who gently tells her that nothing but a miracle can bring back her lost sight, "And the days of miracles are gone," he adds.

"No," she said quietly, "it may not be worth while for me. But the Power that made this world must still be living in it."

"And can transcend law? I wish it could and would."

"Perhaps not that way," she answered with a lovely dignity. "But by comin' to me—and helpin' me to bear. By comfortin' him," for he had dropped his head in her lap and was crying like a child. "Dear, it is the Lord's will"; she said, her hand resting on his head. "I would have liked to see the beautiful world again—but in the next life there will be so much to see, p'r'haps it is best to rest a little first. Dear, dear," as he shook her with his sobs, "I would let you have your will. Shan't the Lord have His will, too, when we love Him so?"

"There is no charge," said the doctor when the man drew out his ancient wallet. "She has done more for me than I could do for her."

Mere Resignation is Not Meant. Said Robert Louis Stevenson: "'John, do you see that bed of resignation?' 'It's doin' bravely, sir.' 'John, I will not have it in my garden. . . . Out with it, and in its place put laughter and a good conceit (that's capital home evergreen), and a bush of flowering sort—the other sort is no ornament to any gentleman's back garden.'"

Professor George Herbert Palmer thus explains that doing the will of God really should mean doing our will, too. "Self-sacrifice," he says, "is self-assertion. Jesus prayed, 'Not my will, but thine, be done.' He did not then lose His will. He asserted and obtained it. For His will was that the divine will should be fulfilled, and fulfilled it was. He set aside one form of His will, His private and isolated will, knowing it to be delusive. But His true will—and He knew it to be His true will—He abundantly obtained. It is no wonder, then, that in explaining these things to His disciples He said, 'My meat it is to do the will of my Father.'"

The Object of Life. The end of life is not to do good, although many of us think so. It is not to win souls, although I once thought so. The end of life is to do the will of God.

How can you build up your life on that principle? Let me give you an outline of a little Bible reading:

The object of life. "I come to do thy will, O God."

The first thing you need after life is food. "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me."

The next thing you need after food is society. "He that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother and sister and mother."

You want education. "Teach me to do thy will, O God."

You want pleasure. "I delight to do thy will, O God."

A whole life can be built upon that one vertical column and, then, when all is over, "He that doeth the will of God abideth forever." *Henry Drummond.*

The dear God hears and pities all:
He knoweth all our wants:
And what we blindly ask of Him,
His love withholds or grants.

And so I sometimes think our prayers
Might well be merged in one
And nest and perch, and hearth and church
Repeat, "Thy will be done." *Whittier.*

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The only way to have a friend is to be one. *Emerson.*
Love keeps the cold out better than a cloak. *Longfellow.*

Our wills are ours, we know not how;
Our wills are ours to make them Thine. *Tennyson.*

The Garden and the Cross give us some idea of the cost of our salvation. *Gerard B. Hallock.*

The crossing of the two wills is sin; the blending of the two wills is victory. *David J. Burrell.*

The school of suffering graduates rare scholars. *Cuyler.*

Great souls are always loyally submissive—reverent to what is over them; only small, mean souls are otherwise. *Carlyle.*

Happiness is nothing but one sweet delight which will arise from the harmonious agreement between our wills and the will of God. *Cudworth.*

Do not look to the soul's readiness and be bold, but look to the flesh's weakness and be humble. *Euthymius Zygadenus.*

The mistakes we mortals make when we have our own way might fairly raise some wonder that we are so fond of it. *George Eliot.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness; and I looked for some one to take pity, but there were none; and for comforters, but I found none. Psa. 69.20.

The kisses of an enemy are deceitful. Prov. 27.6.

But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. Matt. 5.39.

He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities. Isa. 53.5.

Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth. Heb. 12.6.

I seek not mine own will but the will of the Father which hath sent me. John 5.30.

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A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Jesus conquered His temptation in the Garden by meeting it with prayer. The disciples succumbed to their temptation because they met it without prayer. In a temptation to rebellion against the Father's will, the Lord's resource was prayer. In a temptation to cowardice, that ought to have been theirs. Prayer could have made them conquerors, as it made Him; and therefore when temptation of any kind, from any quarter, in any form, at any time, comes to me, I will listen to my Master's voice, "Why sleepest thou? Rise and pray." *G. H. Knight.*

THE LESSON SUMMARY

It is the night of the betrayal. There are two lonely figures—Jesus in the Garden, the disciples a little way off, but He alone with God; and Judas on his way to the Garden, a crowd with him, but he alone with his infamous thoughts. A greater contrast thought can not grasp.

In the Garden were eight of His disciples, and nearer Jesus in His anguish were the three best loved, Peter, James, and John. These three were bidden to watch with Him, but their eyes were heavy, and they fell asleep. Three times Jesus came back to them, feeling the need of their sympathetic presence, but found them sleeping. In His tender compassion He said, "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Three times Jesus prayed to His Heavenly Father in an anguish we can not understand, believing only that it was occasioned by the sins of others, that He might be saved this suffering and death, but submissively He prayed, gaining strength with each uttered petition, and from the struggle He came calm and confident, His will at one with His Father's will.

When the people would force upon Him a crown He fled; when they came out with swords and staves, He went forth to meet them. When Judas betrayed Him with a kiss, He suffered it, saying only, "Wherefore art thou come?" or "Betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss?" To the crowd He said, "I am He," and "they went backward, and fell to the ground." When Peter raised his sword to cut off the ear of the high priest's servant, He rebuked him, saying, "Thus it must be. The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. There is no subject of such vital importance to a Christian as the will of God. *G. Campbell Morgan.*

2. Each hour comes with some fagot of God's will upon its back. *Faber.*

3. Submission is no cry of a defeated soul; it is the soul seizing on the privilege and right of being completed after Christ's pattern. *Phillips Brooks.*

4. There are some lessons which can only be learned in the Garden, and beneath the shadow of the cross: the most deeply taught Christians are generally those who have been brought into the searching fires of deep soul anguish. *F. B. Meyer.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Three ecclesiastical or Jewish trials of Jesus were held. Read an account of the first, the examination before Annas, in John 18.12-14, 19-23; the second before the informal session of the Sanhedrim, in Matt. 26.57-86; Mark 14.53-65; and the third, the formal trial before the Sanhedrim which sent Him to Pilate for sentence, in Matt. 27.1; Luke 22.66-71. 2. What judgment on Christ had Caiaphas already passed? (John 18.14.) 3. What was the name of the "Supreme Court" of the Jews? (Sanhedrim.) 4. What disciple went, not afar off, but with Jesus? (John 18.15, 16.) 5. On what other occasions had the Sanhedrim consulted against Christ? (John 7.45-53; 9.22; 11.57; 12.10.) 6. Why did the scribes and elders wish to put Jesus to death? 7. What act of Jesus had proved that He would not speak slightingly of the temple? (Matt. 21.12, 13. The Lesson for Sept. 9). 8. What proof have we that the words recorded in John 2.19, and wrongly quoted in verse 61, were understood by the Jews? (Matt. 27.40, 63.) 9. What does the word *blaspheme* mean? 10. What charge similar to that of verse 61 was made against Stephen, the first Christian martyr? (Acts 6.13.) 11. Read 1 Pet. 2.19-25, where Christ is declared to be our example as a patient sufferer. 12. Why did not the Sanhedrim execute its sentence of death? (John 18.31.)

BETWEEN LESSON VI AND LESSON VII

After the arrest, a young man—generally supposed to have been Mark, the Evangelist—followed till they seized his linen covering and he left it in their hands and fled. They bound Jesus and took Him to Annas for an unofficial examination. Annas had been high priest, and seems to have retained the title. He asked Jesus about His doctrine. This examination was unwarranted, and Jesus rightly demanded that charges should be brought by witnesses. He had ever taught openly, He told him, and those who had heard could answer. Whereupon a brutal officer struck Him, and said, "Answerest thou the high priest so?" Jesus said, "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou me?" From Annas He was taken to Caiaphas and the Sanhedrim. Matt. 26.51-56; Mark 14.47-52; Luke 22.49-53; John 18.12-14, 19-24.

JESUS BEFORE CAIAPHAS

Matt. 26.57-68. (Read Mark 14.53-72; Luke 22.54-71.) Commit vv. 67, 68.

Golden Text

He is despised and rejected of men. Isa. 53.3.

Time: Early Friday morning, April 7, A. D. 30.

Place: Palace of High Priest. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 86, 116 and 117.

LESSON TEXT. MATT. 26.57-68

57 And they that had laid hold on Jesus led *him* away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled.
58 But Peter followed him afar off unto the high priest's palace, and went in, and sat with the servants, to see the end.
59 Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death;
60 But found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, *yet* found they none. At the last came two false witnesses,
61 And said, This *fellow* said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days.
62 And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what *is it which* these witness against thee?
63 But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God.
64 Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.
65 Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy.
66 What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death.
67 Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote *him* with the palms of their hands,
68 Saying, Prophesy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee?

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

58. *Peter followed afar off.* Midway between courage and cowardice. *Bengel. Went in.* Into the interior court.

59. *The whole council.* The Sanhedrim. *To put him to death.* They

must have a charge worthy of death in order to gain the Roman governor's sentence.

60. *Two false witnesses.* Two witnesses were required by law. (Num. 35.30; Deut. 17.6; 19.15.)

61. *This fellow,* R. V., *this man. I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days.* What Jesus had actually said, was "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." (John 2.19. The Sanhedrim knew what Christ meant. (See Matt. 27.40, 63.) He had used the word "temple" to refer to His own body.

63. *I adjure thee.* This means, "I put thee on oath." A man who kept silent after such an address was held guilty by the law. (Lev. 5.1.) *By the living God.* In the presence of God as a witness and judge. *The Christ.* The promised Messiah.

64. *Thou hast said.* Yes. *Nevertheless.* Furthermore. *Of power.* Of God. Jesus here alludes to Psalm 110.1, Dan. 7.13, 14, which He had repeated to them the last time they came to tempt Him. (Chap. 22.41-46.)

65. *Rent his clothes.* His cloak, or upper garment. *He hath spoken blasphemy.* He has falsely claimed to be divine. Was it blasphemy for a man to call himself Messiah in a country where a Messiah was expected? Obviously not. It might be to call himself Messiah falsely. But that was a point for careful and deliberate examination, not to be taken for granted. *Bruce.*

66. *What think ye?* He thus formally puts the question to vote. *He is guilty of death.* The penalty for blasphemy was death. (Lev. 24.16.)

67. *They spit in his face.* The highest insult that could be offered to any Oriental. (Num. 12.14; Isa. 50.6.) *Buffeted.* Struck Him with their fists.

68. *Prophesy,* divine, guess. Mark and Luke tell us that He was first blindfolded. (Mark 14.65; Luke 22.64.)

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

61. *I am able to destroy the temple and to build it in three days.* Out of all the words He had spoken and works He had done, they could find no graver charge. They could not charge Him with violation of the Sabbath law without approving the interpretations of their old enemies, the Pharisees. They could not charge Him with violent conduct in purifying the temple, for it was precisely conduct all the Pharisees and zealots would approve. They could not prove that the triumphal entry had any political origin or purpose, for He had not used it or made to it any public reference. His denunciation of the Pharisees they could not condemn; nor in His discourses in the city could they find matter to their mind. The utmost they could do was to build on this poor, perverted, misinterpreted saying, "I am able to destroy the temple

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of God and build it in three days." *Fairbairn's Studies, Life of Christ.*

64. *Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man. . . . heaven.* The high priest well knew what the words meant. Into the one phrase—the Christ, the Son of God—the hopes of a Psalm (Psa. 2.7-12), dear to Judaism for the victory and dominance it promised, was expressed; into the other the high apocalyptic dreams of Daniel were condensed. (Dan. 7.13, 14, 22.) In his soul he had little regard to either. They belonged to the things in which the Pharisees gloried, on which the zealots lived. He had seen many enthusiasts live and die, had often seen the fanaticism created by the ancient Messianic hopes break into useless rebellion and perish in blood. Caiaphas could not distinguish between a Jesus of Nazareth and a Judas of Gamala, did not dream that the confession he had heard was to be the symbol of the New Religion, wherein man was to become consciously the Son of God, and God to be loved as the Father of man. All he knew was that his subtlety had succeeded. In claiming to be the Son of God, Jesus could be charged with blasphemy under the law of Moses; in claiming to be the Messiah, He could be represented as denying the authority of Cæsar and setting up as Jewish king. *Fairbairn's Studies in the Life of Christ.*

Jesus came again, though it was but intermittently, when He appeared to His disciples after His death. He came again, to abide with them permanently, when His spirit was given to the Church at Pentecost. He came again, they would all feel who lived to see it, signally in the destruction of Jerusalem, when God executed judgment historically on the race which had rejected Him, and when the Christian Church was finally and decisively liberated from every possibility of dependence on the Jewish. He comes still as His own words to the high priest suggest—"From this time on ye shall see the Son of man coming"—in the great crises of history when the old order changes, yielding place to the new; when God brings a whole age, as it were, into judgment, and gives the world a fresh start. But all these admissions do not enable us to call in question what stands so plainly in the pages of the New Testament—what filled so exclusively the minds of the first Christians—the idea of a personal return of Christ at the end of the world. *Doctor Denney.*

67. *They did spit in his face . . . hands.* What was the meaning of this outburst of savage cruelty of men whom Jesus had never wronged, and some of whose friends must have shared His superhuman gifts of love? Partly it was the instinct of low natures to trample on the fallen, and partly the result of partisanship. For these servants of the priests must have seen many evidences of the hate and dread with which their masters regarded Jesus. But there was doubtless another motive. Not without fear, we may be certain, had they gone forth to arrest at midnight the Personage of whom so many miraculous tales were universally believed. They must have remembered the captains whom Elijah con-

sumed with fire. And, in fact, there was a moment when they all fell prostrate before His majestic presence. But now their terror was at an end: He was helpless in their hands; and they revenged their fears upon the Author of them. *G. A. Chadwick.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

58. *Peter went in and sat with the servants.* He entered the interior court through the "porch," the passageway from the street through the front part of the house. At the "wicket," a heavy folding gate at the street entrance of the porch, he had been detained by a maid till John came to his release. The servants had made a fire on the pavement of the court, which was open to the sky. In one of the rooms of the palace that surrounded this quadrangular court the examination of Jesus was being held, and Jesus could see and hear Peter, for only pillars or arches separated the room from the court.

59. *The chief priests and elders and all the council.* The Sanhedrim consisted of seventy-one members. In their meetings, the "disciples" or students sat in a semi-circle facing the judges. Rabbinic writers give explicit information about trials held before the Sanhedrim. There were two shorthand writers present to take down the speeches made for and against the accused. The voting began with the youngest members, that they might not be influenced by the oldest. The accused might be pronounced "not guilty" on the day of the trial, but could not be pronounced "guilty" on the same day. A trial could not be begun in the night, nor could it be held on Sabbaths or feast days. In capital cases, witnesses must be warned and cautioned.

A High Priest

Rabbi Mendelssohn, in *The Criminal Jurisprudence of the Ancient Hebrews,* says that "The Hebrew criminal code was imbued with the humane maxim, 'Whoever occasions the destruction of a single life is as great a sinner as if he had destroyed the whole world; and, on the other hand, whoso brings about the preservation of a single life is as meritorious as if he had preserved the whole world.' . . . The rabbis, sitting in judgment over a human being, laid every possible but legitimate obstacle in the way of conviction, and employed every legal means to arrive at an acquittal of the prisoner, to save the life of the accused."

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"A process begun, continued, and apparently finished, in the course of one night," says A. Taylor Innes, "commencing with witnesses against the accused who were sought for by the judges, but whose evidence was not sustained even by them; continued by interrogatories which Hebrew law does not sanction, and ending with a demand for confession which its doctors expressly forbid; all followed, twenty-four hours too soon, by a sentence which described a claim to be the Fulfiller of the hopes of Israel as blasphemy—such a process had neither the form nor the fairness of a judicial trial."

60. *At the last came two false witnesses.* Anywhere in Asia, not to speak of other countries, there are hangers-on about the courts ready to sell testimony. *John A. Broadus.*

Rent his clothes. His upper garment, not the high-priestly robe, which was worn only in the temple. Rending the clothes was a sign of mourning or of indignation (Acts 14.14), but in the former sense was forbidden to the high priest (Lev. 10.6; 21.10). The Jews found in 2 Kings 18.37 a precedent for rending the clothes on such occasions of real or supposed blasphemy. Such an action, at first natural, became a matter of special regulation, hence more theatrical than real. *Philip Schaff.*

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. A little girl in New York saw some men at work on the top of a twenty-story building. "What are those boys doing up there?" she asked. Her father explained to her that they were men, but they looked like boys because they were up so high. After a moment of silent thought she exclaimed, "They won't amount to much when they get to Heaven, will they!"

If we measured people, not by size, but by what they really are at heart—by their true selves—we would find some very small people, and among the smallest would be Caiaphas, the high priest of our lesson to-day.

For Older Pupils. A year before this time, officers of the Sanhedrim were sent to arrest Jesus, but returned to the court and said, "Never man spake like this man." The court is confused, a violent debate ensues; the judges denounce the people, and in their anger declare, "This people knoweth not the law." Caiaphas is now the presiding judge, astute, crafty, bitter, ready for the crucifixion. The young Messiah has two friends on the bench—Joseph of Arimathea, and Nicodemus. Both had watched His public movements with liveliest interest. The courage of Nicodemus was now equal to his learning, and inspired the question, "Doth our law judge any man, before it heareth him, and know what he doeth?" The Messiah had not been arrested; there was no prisoner at the bar; no defense is offered; an unanswerable question is asked by a fellow judge. The court is furious; his discipleship is suspected; he is

taunted with the question, "Art thou also of Galilee? Search and look; for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet." The reply is too passionate to be judicial. What a reply for the dispensers of justice to give! Another year comes and goes. The end draws nigh. *John Philip Newman.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. Following Afar

Peter's Self-Confidence. It was Peter who thought himself able to walk upon the water. When Jesus began to tell the disciples about His coming persecution and death, it was Peter who rebuked Him for His gloomy forebodings. Upon the Mount of Transfiguration it was Peter who presumptuously thought to keep the heavenly visitors there for ever. When Jesus, in that last example He gave of lowly service, would wash Peter's feet, he exclaimed, "Thou shalt never wash my feet." "Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee," was his self-confident affirmation to the Saviour the night of the betrayal. Yet after the arrest we see him "following afar off," and this is "on the road to denial," as Jerome has said.

"How easy the thought, in certain moods," says George Macdonald, "of the liveliest, most unselfish devotion! How hard is the doing of the thought in the face of a thousand unlovely difficulties!"

Why Peter Followed Afar. One who knows his weakness may become strong even at the weak point; but he who knows not his weak points can not be strong at any point. Now the followers of Jesus did not know their weakness. They credited themselves with an amount of fidelity and valor which existed only in their imagination, all adopting as their own the sentiment of Peter: "Though I should die with thee, yet I will not deny thee." Alas! they did not know how much fear of man was in them, how much abject cowardice in the presence of danger. Of course, when danger actually appeared, the usual consequence of self-conscious valor followed. All these stout-hearted disciples forsook their Master, and fled. *A. B. Bruce, The Training of the Twelve.*

The Later Examples of the Apostles. Following Christ, the disciples led the world; and as the light that rose over Galilee of the nations becomes ever more intense and bright, so it makes ever more intense and vivid the shadows of these Galilean fishermen, as it throws them across all lands and times.

And such even now is the truest and noblest life. The life which is "hid with Christ," is the life which shines the farthest and that tells the most. Whether in the more quiet paths and scenes of discipleship or in the more responsible and public duties of the apostolate, Jesus demands of us a true, whole-souled, devotion. And here, indeed, the paradox is true, for by losing life we find it, even the life more abundant; for—

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"Men may rise on stepping-stones
Of their dead selves to higher things."
Henry Burton, in The Expositor's Bible.

The Secret of Greatness. What is the secret of great men? Is it not this: that they have gone just a step further than their fellows? Is it not that they have put upon themselves and upon their task just that touch of consecration which their fellows lacked? They have dared to go a step further into the dark and more difficult places of achievement. You can find a hundred men of high intellectual competence for one man of genius, and you can find a hundred men of ordinary bravery for one hero, and the difference between the one and the other is this: In the great genius and in the great hero there is just that touch of daring temper, of abandonment of self, that makes them go a step further into some lonely and difficult place where others will not venture. *W. J. Dawson.*

II. The Spirit of Caiaphas

The Spirit of Envy. The spirit of Caiaphas and the rulers—the spirit of envy—is not dead. It was this same lust of temporal power and envy that made it possible for Christians to persecute Christians in the Middle Ages, to perpetrate the horrors of the Inquisition, the fires of Smithfield, and the massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day. It was this same spirit of envy which made the Established Church of England persecute in England the Puritans, compelling them to flee to the New World, where they might exercise freedom of conscience, and enjoy liberty of worship; and in turn made these same persecuted Puritans when dominant here, persecute the feeble and unprotected Churchmen of the New World. *Hermann Lilienthal.*

The Spirit of Prejudice. "Ye know nothing at all," Caiaphas had said, "nor consider that it is expedient for us that one man die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." He had already prejudged Jesus! Having prejudged Him, he sought false witnesses, and these failing, he turned to Jesus Himself to force Him to say something that could be used against Himself. Could prejudice go to greater length?

"Prejudice is as hostile to truth as water to fire; truth will not fight its way against armed prejudice. He who does not love and honor truth enough to open every portal to it, and welcome it from whatever quarter, is not worthy of it and can not receive it. Prejudice is the closed window-blind, with the mind sitting within in darkness; the sun may be great in his glory, able to give light to innumerable worlds, but he shines in vain for all who are covered by that wilfully closed blind." *S. M. Vernon.*

The Spirit of Self-Interest. The teaching of Jesus was hostile to

the power of the chief priests. When Caiaphas said that "It is expedient that the whole nation perish not," he meant by "the whole nation" Caiaphas and his power.

Doctor F. W. Farrar, in *A Voice from Sinai,* has these two examples of men actuated by this spirit of Caiaphas:

"Was there ever in human history a more despicable picture than that of the prophet Jonah, wishing himself dead because of the gourd, yet 'exceedingly displeased and very angry' because—to save the man's miserable reputation—God did not destroy Ninevah with its one hundred and twenty thousand inhabitants? Was there ever a more wicked speech uttered than that of Napoleon I, when Prince Metternich told him that his plans would cost the lives of a hundred thousand men, and he haughtily replied, 'A hundred thousand men? What is a hundred thousand men to me?' And Metternich, walking to the window, and flinging it open, exclaimed with indignation: 'Sire! Let all Europe hear that atrocious sentiment.' Yet the Hebrew prophet and the modern conqueror were men, not monsters. They only show what gigantic proportions our selfishness can assume."

Self-Centered or God-Centered. There are just two centers in the universe—Self and God. One's thoughts, purposes, desires, aspirations, and endeavors are sure to have their direction toward one or the other of these centers. Every person lives for God, or lives for Self; and his life is a success or a failure accordingly. If a man lives for Self, he is not likely to prove a blessing to himself; and he certainly is no more likely to prove a blessing to others. If he lives for God, his life will reach, in its outgoing, all those who are between himself and God; and so he will prove a blessing to others. *Editorial in Sunday School Times.*

III. Jesus Held His Peace

The Gentleness of Jesus. In the last analysis, Jesus Christ is the only perfect gentleman our earth has ever known—in comparison with whom all the Chesterfields seem boors. For nothing taxes a man so heavily as the task of maintaining smooth, pleasant and charitable relations with one's fellows. And Christ alone was always able to meet storm with calm, hate with love, scowls with smiles, plottings with confidence, envy and bitterness with unruffled tranquillity. In all His relations with His friends and enemies the quality that crowns His method of living and challenges our thought, is the gentleness of His bearing. Matchless the mingled strength and beauty of His life, yet gentleness was the flower and fruitage of it all. *Newell Dwight Hillis, The Investment of Influence.*

The Manliness of Jesus. Here is a boy who loves Christ, honors Him, wants to please Him, wants to serve Him, and yet that boy carries in his mind a distinctly different type of character to which he gives

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this name of manly. He knows that Christ was and is tender and patient. Nay, it is because Christ has revealed to him that tenderness and patience are the consummate utterances of our manhood, that he has recognized the tender, patient Christ as being supremely man. And yet that boy's soul is haunted by the sense that in giving himself up to these new standards and making it the prayer and the struggle of his life to be tender and patient, he would be losing something which he can not bear to lose: the sternness and hardness and quickness to resent an insult, which all the earlier standards of life have agreed upon as the proofs of manliness. The acceptance of the higher standard is haunted by a reluctance to let the lower go.

Many a man, I believe, is in just this condition. He knows that the humanity of Jesus is the type of all humanity. He ought, if he knows that, to go right on and say, "Then Jesus is the manliest of men, and what He would do under any given circumstances must be the manliest thing that under those circumstances it is possible for any man to do. If he would not resent an injury, but forgive it, then forgiveness, not resentment, must be true manliness." *Phillips Brooks.*

The Highest Courage. "I have had to learn," said Abraham Lincoln, "to keep absolutely quiet under every accusation." "Quiet endurance may be more heroic than violent resistance," said Professor Mahaffy, "and the Christian law of bearing insults and injuries meekly tends to the development of the highest courage and of the truest manliness. There is nothing more courageous, more heroic in history, than the living up to this precept."

Spiritual strength consists of two things: power of will and power of self-restraint. It requires two things, therefore, for its existence: strong feelings, and strong command over them. You must measure the strength of a man by the power of the feelings which he subdues, not by the power of those which subdue him. And hence composure is very often the highest result of strength. *F. W. Robertson.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

A man who lives only for himself is engaged in very small business. *Selected.*

When certain persons abuse us, let us ask ourselves what description of character it is that they admire; we shall often find this a very consoling question. *Colton.*

To speak back, what a satisfaction it is, but what a snare: there is hardly one of us who can afford to do it. *W. W. Sidey.*

Be Thou my Sun, my selfishness destroy;
Thy atmosphere of love be all my joy;
Thy presence be my sunshine ever bright,
My soul the little mote that lives but in Thy sight.

Gerhard Tersteegen.

Why should Christ argue? The great argument of His life was over—the argument with God in the night-time, in the Garden; and His heart was set past doubt or fear upon the cross. *George Adam Smith.*

Tried by final tests, and reduced to its essential elements, sin is preference of self to God, and the assertion of the human will against the will of God. *John Watson.*

One thing is clear to me, that no indulgence of passion destroys the spiritual nature so much as respectable selfishness. *George Macdonald.*

He who walks through life with an even temper and a gentle patience—patient with himself, patient with others, patient with difficulties and crosses—he has an every-day greatness beyond that which is won in battle or chanted in cathedrals. *Orville Dewey.*

What is it that the world sees in this trial? Not weakness such as moves to scorn, not merely pathos such as moves to pity, but nobility and majesty and dignity and glory. *W. W. Sidey.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. John 16.32.

Thou shalt not bear false witness. Ex. 20:16.

If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. John 15.18.

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. Isa. 53.7.

I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting. Isa. 50.6.

For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps. 1 Pet. 2.20, 21.

The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. Psa. 110.1.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Paul Carus, in his story of *The Crown of Thorns,* gives this dialogue between Jesus and Ben-Midrash, a gardener living near Capernaum. Ben-Midrash speaks: "Didst thou not say that men can not gather grapes of thorns and figs of thistles? Lo! I have raised grapes that grow upon thorns. What sayest thou? Art thou truly the prophet, and hast thou truly been sent by God?"

Jesus glanced at the grapes that had grown on the thorns, and then looked Ben-Midrash straight in the eye, and the look went deep into the gardener's heart. "Ben-Midrash," He said, "thou hast done well to graft the vine upon the thorn of thy vineyard. Thou asketh me whether I am a true prophet. Observe what I am doing. I do the same unto men which thou hast done unto the thorn. David cried to the Lord, 'Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.' As nobler plants can be grafted upon the thorn, so can the divine Spirit be grafted into the heart. My work is to engraft purity and righteousness into the souls of men. Thy thorn has ceased to be a thorn: it hath become a vine. Briers and brambles of bitterness are the harvest of thy heart. Why dost thou not do the same to thy heart that thou hast done with the thorn? Plant the word of truth within thy soul, and it will bring forth the sweet grapes of divine grace, of righteousness, and of love."

Ben-Midrash bowed down before Jesus and said: "What is my soul but a thorn? Prune Thou its prickly branches and graft Thy soul in mine."

THE LESSON SUMMARY

Throughout Christ's life we have heard of the enmity of scribes and Pharisees, but only once before its close have the chief priests appeared on the scene with all their bitter malice. That priestly silence had not been priestly sympathy, Jesus well knew. In the lesson about Peter's Confession we heard Jesus say to His disciples that He "must suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes." The fame of His miracle of raising Lazarus to life led to a meeting of the Sanhedrim, where a resolution to bring about the death of Jesus was passed. There Caiaphas announced his opinion, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.

The trial of Jesus was sixfold: three times before the Jewish authorities and three times before the Roman officials. From the arrest in Gethsemane He was led before Annas. This was an informal trial, no witnesses were called, but an attempt was made to ensnare Jesus in His own words. From Annas He was taken to Caiaphas, the high priest whom the Romans recognized. John had come with Him, but Peter followed afar off, and took a place with the servants in the court, there to be tested and to fall.

False witnesses were sought, and two were selected who testified, "This man said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days"; thus did they pervert His saying about His own death. "Answereth thou nothing?" said Caiaphas, but Jesus calmly held His peace. Only when formally put on oath did Jesus solemnly assert that He was indeed the Son of God, and add that He should sit hereafter on

the right hand of power. This avowal satisfied Caiaphas. He accused Jesus of blasphemy, and according to custom, rent his garment in token of his horror. Then he put the question—What think ye? The answer came, He is worthy of death.

The scene closed with the infamous treatment of Christ; spat upon, struck, and further insulted, He yet "held His peace."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. In what respects was the trial of Christ illegal?
2. Why could not some other charge have been brought against Christ?
3. What reasons can be given for believing that Jesus is the Son of God?

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Look up these references which show that the ancient Jews were prone to the sin of drunkenness: Prov. 21.17, 23, 29-32; Eccles. 10.17; Isa. 28.7. 2. Tell the story of Belshazzar's drunken feast and its result. (Dan. 5.) 3. Of what verse of the next lesson is the scoffing thief on the cross an illustration? (19.) 4. What other Bible verses would be appropriate Golden Texts for the next lesson?

THE WORLD'S TEMPERANCE SUNDAY

Isaiah 5.11-23. (Read 1 Kings 20.13-21.) Commit v. 11.

Golden Text

I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection. 1 Cor. 9.27.

LESSON TEXT. ISAIAH 5.11-23

11 Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, *that* they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, *till* wine inflame them!
12 And the harp, and the viol, the tabret, and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts: but they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands.
13 Therefore my people are gone into captivity, because *they have* no knowledge: and their honourable men *are* famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst.
14 Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it.
15 And the mean man shall be brought down, and the mighty man shall be humbled, and the eyes of the lofty shall be humbled:
16 But the Lord of hosts shall be exalted in judgment, and God that is holy shall be sanctified in righteousness.
17 Then shall the lambs feed after their manner, and the waste places of the fat ones shall strangers eat.
18 Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope:
19 That say, Let him make speed, *and* hasten his work, that we may see *it:* and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know *it!*
20 Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!
21 Woe unto *them that are* wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!
22 Woe unto *them that are* mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink:
23 Which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

11. *Rise up early.* Drinking in the morning was considered disreputable by Jews and Romans. Intoxication at an early hour indicated confirmed

intemperance. *Inflame them.* Compare the apt Indian phrase, *fire-water.*

12. *They regard not the work of the Lord.* They pay no heed to that which Isaiah plainly foresees—their impending destruction.

13. *Therefore.* Because of their blindness. *My people are gone into captivity.* In the Hebrew it is the perfect of prophetic certitude. *Cheyne. Captivity.* The captivity of Babylon. *Because they have no knowledge.* Unawares, without foreseeing their fate.

14. *Hell.* The underworld, the abode of the dead. To understand this passage we must remember that there was a twofold conception of *Sheol* or *Hades.* First, it was localized underground. Hence one of the synonyms for Hades both in Hebrew and Assyrian is "the pit." Next, it was conceived of as a person. The two conceptions are very closely connected; thus the Greek *Hades* and the Teutonic *Hel* were variously applied to the infernal ruler and to his, or her, kingdom. *Cheyne. Opened her mouth without measure.* Enlarged her capacity without limit. So many of the Jews would meet death by famine, thirst, and the sword, that in poetic fancy, the regions of the dead would need to be enlarged to receive them. *Their.* Jerusalem's.

15, 16. These verses seem to be parenthetical. They are mainly taken from 2.9, 11, 17, but with a modification in their meaning. *Cheyne. God shall be sanctified.* In that time of righteous judgment, God's absolute supremacy shall be clearly seen.

17. The obverse of the picture in verse 14. The city with all its tumult and gaiety has vanished into the underworld, and now flocks are seen grazing amidst the ruins—an image of awful desolation rather than "idylic peace." *Skinner.* Considering that the Holy Land is at present a great pasture-ground for tribes of Arab shepherds, and that the modern Jerusalem, which has been built out of rubbish, is a Mohammedan city, what verse 17 prophesies has been literally fulfilled. *Delitzsch.*

18. Probably the true idea is that of the ancient interpretation of the rabbis, "An evil inclination is at first like a fine hair string, but the finishing like a cart rope." At first they draw sin with a slender cord; then they go on to greater deeds of iniquity that urge them on, and draw them with their main strength, as with a cart rope. They make a strong effort to commit iniquity. *Barnes.* These men allow themselves to be yoked to sin like beasts of burden. *Cheyne.* The figure seems to express two ideas: (1) the determination with which these men set themselves to work iniquity, and (2) the inevitable connection between sin and judgment. *Skinner.*

19. *Let him make speed.* In their defiant unbelief of divine retribution they scoff at God, and challenge Him to fulfil the words of the prophet.

20. A woe on those who confound, or rather reverse, the distinctions of good and evil, who say "Fair is foul and foul is fair." Compare Job 17.12. *Cheyne.* It is an evil and a bitter thing to forsake the Lord (Jer.

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2.19); they call it good. It is good to be near God (Psa. 78.28); they removed their heart far from him (29.13). *Kay.*

23. *For reward.* For bribes. "The wicked" and "the righteous" are here used in their forensic sense: "he who is in the wrong," and "he who is in the right." So, "take away the righteousness" means to declare guilty,—the opposite of justify. *Skinner.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

12. *The harp,* etc. Instruments of music were formerly dedicated to Jehovah. (1 Sam. 10.5.) Follow them to one of their assemblies. There are all sorts of musical instruments: the one that David played (1 Sam. 16.18), a stringed instrument with a sounding-board, like the lute; another with strings, but without the sounding-board, the psaltery; the tabret, or drum; and the flute, or pipe. *Mitchell.*

A Harp, Double Flute, Tabret, and Viol

They regard not the work of the Lord. Pleasure-loving people forget God, His counsels, His work. Their love of drink and dissipation blinds their eyes, dulls their ears, so that they have no quiet moment to recollect their Maker. These verses are exactly true nowadays of many. They never have time to reflect, they enslave themselves to drink and a passion for amusement, till duty, charity, compassion, Divine Truth have all faded out of their minds. *Edward King.* Nothing kills the conscience like steady drinking to a little excess; religion acts on it only as an opiate. *Smith.*

They send forth their little ones like a flock,
And their children dance;
They take the timbrel and harp,
And rejoice at the sound of the organ;
They spend their days in mirth,
And in a moment go down to the grave.
And they say unto God—
"Depart from us;
For we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.
What is the Almighty that we should serve him?
And what profit should we have if we pray unto him?"

Job 21.11-15.

18. *Woe unto them that draw sin as with a cart rope.* No one can look at the seething current of modern society and not be utterly appalled by the brutalities and crimes, the drunkenness and debaucheries, the iniquities and outrages, that fill our newspapers and are almost epidemic.

These brutalities and crimes are not confined to the lower classes, but they break out among young men and women who have had the opportunities of our boasted education. There are corruption, bribery, and embezzlement by our public servants.

In all this festering mass of sores lies our labor. The remedy is not in the efforts of labor or capital to promote their material interests; or in the efforts men make to better their condition by theories of social organization. These things will, under natural laws in a free country, work out their own salvation. The vital need is the religion of Jesus, it is Christ in the individual man—reverence for the great fundamental precepts of the Master—their incorporation into actual daily life as controling springs of action. *John D. Long.*

19. *Let him make speed.* God notices the sin of those who scoff at warnings. Their imitators in modern times ask, "Who has returned from the other world to tell us of its joys or pains? Where is God's Hand manifest amidst life's confusion?" Such talk as this stifles conscience, weakens the springs of right action, disposes to a life of selfishness those who listen to it. *Edward King.*

20. *Put darkness for light.*

Thus to the tyrant Shen, our King, Wan said:
"Alas, alas! Yin's king so great,
Not Heaven, but spirits flush your face so red,
That evil thus you imitate.
You do in all your conduct what is wrong—
Darkness to you the same as light;
Your noisy feasts and revels you prolong,
The day through you is black as night."

A Chinese Author, about 450 B. C.

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

11. *That rise up early in the morning.* Great banquets were held by the princes and nobles, beginning at an early hour (Eccles. 10.16) and accompanied by music of an exciting kind (Amos 6.5, 6) which were continued into the night and terminated in general drunkenness. Two kinds of intoxicating liquor seems to have been consumed at the banquets, ordinary grape wine and a much stronger drink, said to have been made of dates, pomegranates, apples, honey, barley, and other ingredients, and known as "strong drink." *George Rawlinson.*

11. *That continue till night.* D'Arvieux says, that while he was staying

among the Arabs on Mount Carmel, a wreck took place on the coast, from which one of the emirs obtained two large casks of wine. He forthwith sent to the neighboring emirs, inviting them to come and drink it. They gladly came, and continued drinking for two days and two nights, till not a drop of the wine was left. In like manner, Tavernier relates that the King of Persia sent for him early one morning to the palace, where with other persons, he was obliged to sit all the day, and late at night, drinking wine with the Shah; but at last, "the king growing sleepy, gave us leave to depart, which we did very willingly, having had hard labor for seventeen hours together." *Albert Barnes.*

22. *Mingle strong drink.* Distillation was unknown among the ancients (excepting possibly the Chinese), and therefore they could know nothing of our distilled liquors, brandy, whisky, gin, rum, etc. . . . As for the strength of their fermented drinks, it seems probable that the average was below fifteen per cent. of alcohol, but here it must be remembered that the ancients rarely drank wines undiluted, and when they did so, were in the habit of drinking copiously also of pure water; and also that the art of adulteration, now perfected almost beyond the possibility of detection, was then very little understood or practised, for certainly the aromatizing with spices, and mixing with tar and other substances, as practised by them, can not be held comparable, for their intoxicating effects, with our modern scientific and most unscrupulous mysteries of drink concoctions. *Alex Gustafson.*

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Several years ago a captain in the United States army took an old gun, wound around it ten miles of copper wire, and then connected it with an electrical battery. In this way he made it the most powerful magnet in the world, capable of lifting twenty-two tons. Great cannon balls and huge iron spikes when brought near enough, would leap up from the ground and hang all over the magnet, till it looked like a huge bristling porcupine.

To-day we have a lesson from the Old Testament, from the book of Isaiah. The stern old prophet is talking about an evil which has for some people all the attractive power of this magnet.

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. Woe Unto Them That Are Mighty to Drink Wine

Great Drinkers of Antiquity. Historic records of nations of antiquity are replete with proofs that the chief destroyer of individual and national greatness was drink. The early Medes and Persians gave rigorous education to their youth, who were brought up on a regimen of bread,

cresses, and water, in order to accustom them early to temperance, and to strengthen their bodies. Nor were the four great Asiatic monarchies of antiquity, Assyria, Babylonia, Media, and Persia, conquered and destroyed by the sword until their earlier characteristics of manliness, patriotism, and morality had been sapped by drunkenness and debauchery.

The vast Assyrian power whose foundation reaches beyond historic record, after incorporating Syria, Babylonia, Egypt, Asia Minor, etc., was at last subdued by the rebel sober provinces of Media and Babylonia. We are told that the motto of the last independent ruler of Assyria, Sardanapalus, was "Eat, drink, play, and know that thou art mortal; drain present delights, there is no voluptuousness after death."

Familiar, but always impressive, is the account history gives us of the visit of the young twelve-year-old Cyrus to his grandfather, King Astyages of Media. The little fellow, destined later to overthrow Media and Babylonia, and to found the great Persian monarchy, was so astonished and disgusted at the riotous drunkenness of the Median court, that he refused to touch the wine, a custom expected of him as cup-bearer to his grandfather. "You seemed," he exclaimed to him, referring to a recent banquet, "you seemed to have forgotten yourself, not to know that you were the king, and when you wished to dance you could not stand."

And time brought the days when this Cyrus subjugated Media and deposed his grandfather (B. C. 559). A few years later, when combined against by Babylonia and Lydia, Cyrus was defeated just outside the walls of Babylon. But Nabunahid (Belshazzar), the victor, instead of following up his success, arranged in its celebration that infamous feast in the midst of which the ominous *"Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin!"* was flashed along the wall by an unknown hand, and Cyrus, regathering his remaining forces, stormed the unprepared city, and slew Belshazzar in his cups.

Persia, in its turn becoming weakened by wine, passed under the conquering hand of Alexander the Great, the same who for a time withstood its corrupting influences, but of whose death by intemperance Seneca writes: "Here is this hero, invincible by all the toils of prodigious marches, by all the danger of sieges and combats, by the most violent extremes of heat and cold, here he lies, conquered by his intemperance, and struck to earth by the fatal cup of Hercules." . . .

As the great Asiatic monarchies fell first by wine and then by the sword, so Egypt, the history of whose vast and highly civilized power reaches back over three thousand years before Christ, fell likewise into the slough of drink and was conquered by the Persian province.

But in speaking of antiquity we generally mean, not the Assyrians, Babylonians, Medes, Persians, or even the Egyptians, but the Greeks and Romans. . . .

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In Athens, the severe laws of Draco condemned to death any person convicted of being drunk. The wise laws of Solon condemned a slave to a heavy fine for the first time he was intoxicated, and in case of a relapse, to death. A citizen seen to enter a drinking shop was dishonored for ever, and no more was required to cause the banishment of a senator from the Areopagus (high court of Athens). In Sparta, Lycurgus gave the command that annually the helots (slaves) of Sparta should be intoxicated, and of the orgies ensuing among them the youth should be made spectators, to infuse in them aversion to drink.

But in Greece, as in the great monarchies of the East, drunkenness prevailed against the efforts at restraining it.

In the first days of Rome wine was almost unknown. Drinking habits did not become general until the time of Julius Cæsar. During the reigns of Augustus and his immediate successors, wine culture and wine became a passion among the Romans. During the Empire it abounded, and history shows beyond question that enervation, loose morals, corruptions, and crime increased among the Romans in almost an exact ratio to the increase of their drink habits. *Alex Gustafson, in The Foundation of Death.*

II. Call Things by Their Right Names

They Call Evil Good. There is no tendency more dangerous than to call the vicious unfortunate, or the wicked gay. By this means the evil is concealed from the conscience. The prophet speaks of the tendency when it has gone so far as to exchange to opposite poles. The good is called evil and the evil good. Even so "a good fellow" is often the synonym for "a bad fellow," for revelry and selfish enjoyment and neglect of home often characterize the good fellow. The young are often led astray by evil in the angel dress of beautiful speech. *W. M. Statham.*

There are persons who gloss over evil deeds by fair-sounding names, who call cowardice caution, and rashness courage, niggardliness thrift, and wasteful profusion generosity. The same men are apt also to call good evil; they brand prudence with the name of cunning, call meekness want of proper spirit, sincerity rudeness, and firmness obstinacy. *George Rawlinson.*

Confusion of Moral Distinctions. It is indeed a serious reflection how far we may succeed, by acts of depraved will, in shutting out the light that would stream in upon the mind, or in quenching the light within. Both are at once involved in the sin against intelligence. Another serious question is, how far words may influence thought, and the habit of saying false things disable the mind from seeing the true. *E. Johnson.*

Do not we with one breath assert the inviolable sanctity of the truth, but with the next breath make provision for benevolent, business, jocose, or thoughtless falsehood? Do we not, in the abstract, assert the claims

of justice, and the obligation to give every man his own, but, in application to specific cases, think it lawful to enrich ourselves at other men's expense, or take advantage of another's weakness, ignorance, or error? Do we not approve the provisions of the gospel, in so far as they apply to other people, but repudiate or pass them by as applying to ourselves? What is all this but saying of evil, it is good, and of good, it is evil? *J. A. Alexander.*

Saying Things Do not Exist, Does not Put Them out of Existence. Saying evil is good, does not make it good. When cholera was raging on the Ganges, a medical commission gave a leading Brahmin a microscope and showed him the cholera germs in the water. The Brahmin did not propose to take steps to purify the water, but said he could easily kill the microbes. When asked how he would do this, he explained by seizing the microscope and dashing it to pieces on the stones.

"Sin as a caterpillar is bad enough, but sin as a butterfly is a thousand times worse," says Doctor David Gregg. "On every wing there is a rainbow of light and beauty. The poets call the butterfly 'a flying and flashing gem,' 'a flower of Paradise.' But the butterfly is only a caterpillar beautified with wings. It is only a painted worm decked in a velvet suit, and adorned with sparkling gems. If sin in its grossest forms be dangerous, what must be the unmeasured power of sin when it puts on the robe of beauty? Sin often wears the wings of wit, the wings of fashion, the wings of attractive names."

Euphemisms. Every language has been rich in what grammarians call euphemisms—these nice and delicate words which cover some offensive truth. You will remember how, when Prince George went over to Crete to become governor, there had been before he went fierce rioting and bloodshed between the Moslems and Christians. And when he went, and was received with great enthusiasm, the correspondent of the *Times* gave a very curious description of the scene. "The long rows of ruined houses, beneath which, in some cases, the fire is still smoldering," he writes, "are almost concealed by festoons and banners." It was an attempt to decorate and hide the tragedies. And language is always doing that. It has been busy in fashioning its own festoons and banners to hide the ugly things. It is this tendency of human speech that is caught up and wrested by the devil into an engine and instrument of ill. Who called the world of self and pleasure the gay world? Who named the business man whose transactions border on the shady, the smart man? Who said that the toper who is breaking his wife's heart had a little weakness? Who smiled and said the profligate was only fast? *G. H. Morrison.*

III. Bribery

A Bribe to Sell the Best Interests of a Church. When Mr. Moody was in charge of St. George's Church in New York, a man came to

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him and asked what he most wanted. "A parish building," said Mr. Moody.

"How much will a parish building cost?"

"Nearly two hundred thousand dollars."

"Well, if you will let me run the choir, I will give you my check for two hundred thousand dollars."

"I can not do it; I can not do what you ask."

"Then I won't come to your church any more."

"I can not help it."

"He never came again," said Mr. Moody in relating this incident, "but I should have been ruined if I had accepted his offer. I got my parish building within six months without any conditions."

Pilate Was Bribed. Pilate was not blinded nor infuriated. His zeal was not goaded on by his prejudices. He was calm; he was clear-headed; he was calculating; he did the whole thing in cold blood. He said deliberately in himself, "Although this man is just and right, and all these men are his enemies, yet it will not do for me to lose favor at Rome"; and so he sold Christ rather than lose his own political prestige. He was bribed. Some men are bribed in the palm, and some men are bribed in the head; but he was bribed by political ambition. . . . If he had not seen a better way; if he had not been assured of the innocence of the Master; if he had had nothing to overcome, we should have ranked him with the whole horde of transgressors; but the strength of convictions, the activity of conscience, the abundance of kind feeling which he overcame in giving way to the mob, measure the guilt of Pilate. *Henry Ward Beecher.*

Who Is Guilty? Where is the root of the political treason of bribery? Is it to be found in the man who is bribed, or the man who offers the bribe? In the court of conscience, are we to discharge as guiltless the editor of the reform journal who offers five dollars to a policeman to refrain from arresting him at an inconvenient hour, and hold the Tammany hall policeman guilty who accepts the fee for not performing his duty? *Mornay Williams.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

No guise is too good for sin to appropriate. *Ram's Horn.*

We may shake our fist at the growing thundercloud, but it will not disappear. *E. Johnson.*

If thou wouldst conquer thy weakness, thou must never gratify it. *William Penn.*

Strong drink dulls and deadens the higher faculties of the soul. *W. Clarkson.*

No greater evil can come upon a land than the poisoning of the fountains of justice. *R. Tuck.*

Nothing kills the conscience like strong drinking to a little excess; and religion, even while the conscience is alive, acts on it only as an opiate. *George Adam Smith.*

As the incoming tide had no respect for the commands of King Canute' followers, so neither can the tidal march of moral forces be stayed by defiance or incantations. *E. Johnson.*

Every act of selfish pleasure-seeking, untouched by nobler aims, weakens and worsens the soul's life. *G. S. Findlay.*

The pull of sin may at first be that of a silken thread; presently it becomes that of a strong string; then it is found to be that of a hard wire; finally it reaches that of a cart rope. *W. Clarkson.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

It is not for kings to drink wine: nor for princes strong drink; lest they drink and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted. Prov. 31.4, 5.

But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment. Isa. 28.7.

Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the Lord, and depart from evil. Prov. 3.7.

Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? There is more hope of a fool than of him. Prov. 26.12.

Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me. Psa. 19.13.

For my people is foolish, they have not known me; they are sottish children, and they have none understanding: they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge. Jer. 4.22.

O Lord, how great are thy works! and thy thoughts are very deep. A brutish man knoweth not; neither doth a fool understand this. Psa. 92.5, 6.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

The blind and cowardly spirit of evil is for ever telling you that evil things are pardonable, and you shall not die for them, and that good things are impossible, and you need not live for them. And if you believe these things, you will find some day, to your cost, that they are untrue. *Ruskin.*

THE LESSON SUMMARY

The prophet Isaiah denounces the multitudes of his generation who are so thoroughly under the influence of strong drink that they even

rise up early to drink, and continue drinking till late at night. The instruments of music that had been dedicated to Jehovah they make use of to increase their revelry. They are so enslaved by drink that they give no heed to God nor His warnings. What shall their fate be? Already their destruction stands clearly outlined in the prophet's vision. They shall be taken captive, they shall perish in such numbers that the abode of the dead will have to be extended to receive them. The mean man shall be brought down, the lofty shall be humbled, but God shall be exalted. Desolation shall reign where now their drunken revelries are held.

Woe to all evil-doers, exclaims Isaiah, to those who are at first attracted to sin as with a small cord and then are drawn as with a strong rope; woe to those that scoff and challenge God to fulfil His righteous judgments; woe to those that call evil good and good evil, darkness light, and light darkness, bitterness sweet, and sweetness bitter; woe to those that are self-conceited; woe to those that are drunken with wine, so drunken that they pervert justice and take bribes.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. More important than even the question of what a law is, is the question of the honest enforcement of the law. *Roosevelt.*

2. In many lands and ages men have boasted of their power to withstand the influence of the intoxicating cup. What a miserable degradation of human strength! *W. Clarkson.*

3. Presumption is the evil into which men are led through temporary successes. See the effect of prosperity upon Nebuchadnezzar. David knew human nature well, and he taught us to pray, "Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins." *R. Tuck.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. There were three civil or Roman trials of Jesus. Read an account of the first examination before Pilate in Matt. 27.11-14; John 18.28-38; of the reference to Herod in Luke 23.6-12; of the final trial before Pilate in Matt. 27.15-31; John 18.39-19.16. 2. Why would not the Jews go into the judgment hall? (John 18.28.) They would not "defile themselves," yet they were bent on putting Christ to death. Is there anything like this in modern life? 3. Of what had Jesus been accused? (John 18.19; Matt. 26.60-66; Mark 14.55-64; Luke 22.66-71.) 4. What humiliating confessions were the chief priests forced by Pilate to make? 5. How did Pilate try to avoid deciding the case? (Luke 23.6, 7.) 6. What conversation did Jesus have with Pilate? (John 18.33-38.) 7. Why did Pilate yield to the mob? (Mark 15.15; Luke 23.13-23; John 19.7-12.) 8. After condemning Jesus, how did Pilate claim to repudiate his responsibility? (Matt. 27.24.)

BETWEEN LESSON VII AND LESSON IX

At daybreak on Friday the Sanhedrim held a meeting, formally condemned Jesus, and hurried Him away to Pilate, the governor.

John followed, and being known to the high-priest, was allowed to enter the palace. Peter followed afar, and when John heard him at the gate he went out and persuaded the maid who kept it to allow Peter to enter. During the two or three hours in which Jesus was being tried in a room off the court, occurred the three denials of Peter. From the room where He was being tried, the Lord looked on Peter and Peter remembered that He had said to him, "Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice." He went out and wept bitterly.

Meanwhile Judas, when he saw Jesus was condemned, repented and brought the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests, saying, "I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood." "What is that to us? See thou to that," was their cold answer. Throwing down the price of his treachery, Judas hurried out and hanged himself. With the money the priests bought the potter's field, to bury strangers in.

When the high priests had taken Jesus to Pilate in the pretorium, they themselves would not enter, "that they might not be defiled," for Pilate was a Gentile. Pilate was obliged to come out to them and ask what their accusation was. Insolently they answered, "If this were not a malefactor we would not have delivered Him up unto thee." "Take ye Him," then returned Pilate contemptuously, "and judge Him according to your law." They were thus forced to acknowledge sullenly that they could not put a man to death, and to give their charge against Jesus, not the one of blasphemy, which no Roman would trouble himself about, but the charge of sedition. "We found this man perverting our nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, and saying that He Himself is Christ, a king."

The governor marveled at the silence of Jesus during this charge, and took Him into the pretorium to question Him. "Art thou the king of the Jews?" he asked. "What hast Thou done?" "My kingdom is not of this world," Jesus answered, "if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight." "I find in Him no fault at all," said Pilate, again going out to the chief-priests. "He stirreth up the people," they cried out, "teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place." The word Galilee struck Pilate. He belonged then to Herod's jurisdiction, he could send Him to Herod, and thus make friends with him and free himself from the troublesome matter.

Herod was glad to see Jesus, because "he had heard many things of Him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by Him," Luke tells us. But to all his questions, Jesus maintained a dignified silence. Then Herod and his men of war mocked Him, arrayed Him in gorgeous robes of royalty, and sent Him back again to Pilate. (Matt. 26.69-75; 27.1-14; Mark 14.66-72; 15.1-5; Luke 22.55-62; 22.66-23.12; John 18.15-18, 25-38.)

JESUS BEFORE PILATE

Luke 23.13-25. (Read Matt. 27.3-30; Mark 15.2-19; Luke 23.1-12.) Commit vv. 20, 21.

Golden Text

Then said Pilate: I find no fault in this man. Luke 23.4.

Time: Friday Morning, April 7, A. D. 30.

Place: Castle of Antonia, or Palace of Herod. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 55, 86 and 118-120.

LESSON TEXT. LUKE 23.13-25

13 And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people,

14 Said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and, behold, I having examined *him* before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him:

15 No, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him.

16 I will therefore chastise him, and release *him.*

17 (For of necessity he must release one unto them at the feast.)

18 And they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this *man,* and release unto us Barabbas:

19 (Who for a certain sedition made in the city, and for murder, was cast into prison.)

20 Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them.

21 But they cried, saying, Crucify *him,* crucify him.

22 And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise him, and let *him* go.

23 And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified. And the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed.

24 And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required.

25 And he released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired; but he delivered Jesus to their will.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

13. *Pilate.* Pontius Pilate, Roman procurator or governor of Judea (and Idumea and Samaria) from 26 A. D. to 36 A. D.

14. *As one that perverteth the people.* See verse 2 of this chapter.

They had condemned Jesus for blasphemy, but they brought to Pilate a political accusation. *Having examined him before you,* and also privately. (See John 18. 33-38.)

16. *Chastise.* A mild name for an ugly thing. *Bruce.* The priests could see that a judge who was willing to inflict this upon an innocent person could be induced by further pressure to inflict death. *Plummer.*

17. *He must release one unto them.* Pilate thought the people would, of course, prefer Jesus to the other notable prisoner then in bonds, as they would not be influenced by the envy which he clearly saw was influencing the chief priests and scribes. Probably at this stage of the proceedings the word from Pilate's wife (Matt. 27.19) was brought, urging him to keep his hands off "that just man." Meanwhile the chief priests and elders used the opportunity to persuade the crowd to prefer Barabbas and call for his release. *Baugher.*

18. *Barabbas.* Bar-abbas, the son of his father.

23. *Instant.* Urgent.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

13. *Pilate.* The legal title of the Roman governor of Judea was procurator, that is, one who took charge of anything—(in this case, of the revenue of a province)—for another, the governor-general. . . .

Though nominally under Syria, the procurators of Judea were, however, practically independent, having a separate military command and power of jurisdiction, subject to no interference on the part of their titular superiors, unless special and serious causes, such as insurrection, demanded action. Their residence, or pretorium, was not at Jerusalem, but at Cæsarea, where the palace, built by Herod, seems to have been occupied by them. On special occasions, but especially at the Jewish feasts, when many precautions were necessary, on account of the myriads of Jews streaming towards the Holy City, the procurator went to Jerusalem, where he took up his abode in the great palace of Herod. *Cunningham Geikie, New Testament Hours.*

Pilate's administration had been a long contest between Roman insolence and Jewish fanaticism, between Roman irreligiousness and Jewish religious scrupulosity. One of Pilate's first acts on becoming procurator of Judea was to move the headquarters of his army from Cæsarea to Jerusalem, and to bring with him into the Holy City the idolatrous standards of heathen Rome. This outrage of Jewish religious scruples aroused the people to frenzy. They hurried in crowds to Cæsarea to implore the removal of these standards, and only after five days of sullen obstinacy on the part of the governor, and ill-treatment of the Jews at the hands of the soldiers, did Pilate at length yield to the frenzied mob.

Then, too, he had taken the Corban—the sacred money of the temple treasury—and had put it to the profane use of constructing an aqueduct.

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This mal-use of the sacred money led to another tumult, which was suppressed by the massacre, not only of the rioters, but also of innocent spectators. And once more from the Scriptures we know that on one occasion he slew some Galileans in the temple while they were worshiping, and mingled their blood with the blood of the sacrifices. *Hermann Lilienthal.*

14. *I have found no fault in this man.* It is notorious how all the poets have failed to interest their readers in a perfect man. Let any novelist try to describe a character that is flawless, proportioned, symmetrical, and the image fades so far from all reality that in twenty pages the character is dead. I question if, in all the literature of the world, there has been one novelist, one dramatist, who ever invested with a living charm a character that was not touched with sin. But in its length, its onward reach to Calvary, there was no flaw in the character of Jesus. And in its breadth, its sympathy and love, its perfect trust in God, and its perfect reliance on its Father's will, it was so true that even the atheist admits that our Redeemer had a genius for religion. And yet, in spite of the perfect symmetry of character—and I use the words *in spite of* quite deliberately—there was never a life with such a charm for man, and never a character that so drew the world, as the life and the character of Jesus Christ. *G. H. Morrison.*

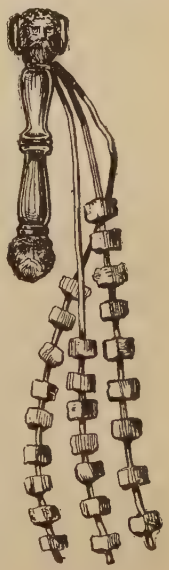
16. *I will chastise him.* We think with tender sympathy of Christ's sufferings at this time. It is difficult to realize how great they were. There are familiar verses here, which we read trippingly, when in truth the voice should fall and pause, while the heart seeks to know the fellowship of His sufferings. "And the men that held Jesus, beat him, and they blindfolded him, and asked him, saying, Who is it that struck thee? Pilate therefore took Jesus and scourged him." Have we any idea what those blows of the soldiers were? Have we ever sought to interpret that word scourged? "The intermediate death," they called it. It was a punishment of terrible severity, under which a prisoner sometimes died. These are not trifling, unimportant details; in comparison with the cross, no doubt, they seem slight, but in comparison with the worst sufferings of multitudes of men, they are heavy.

Yet in all probability the mental strain and pain of this trial was greater still. For hours He underwent "examination by hatred—a terrible thing." He heard their savage shouts, "Away with him!" "Crucify him"; heard them threaten Pilate; heard them prefer Barabbas; heard them cast to the winds their Messianic hopes, crying, "We have no king but Cæsar." There was nothing they would not do to bring Him to death. He saw and heard and felt all this. Did the thought visit Him, then, "Is man worth saving? is he savable? Has not my work failed already?" We can not tell. But this is plain, that during the long hours of that morning the tempter made a sustained assault upon His patience, upon His self-control, upon His faith in God, upon His love for man. *W. W. Sidey.*

21. *Crucify him.* Disappointed enthusiasm is dangerously near to hate. The greater the act that kindled the enthusiasm, the harder it is to satisfy demands. The men that had been stirred to admiration by a miracle (raising of Lazarus) would be sure to crave miracles, and the craving ungratified would leave them, first suspicious, then discontented, then angry. Their enthusiasm was for the power rather than the Person of Christ. His behavior in Jerusalem could only disappoint and provoke. When the men who had hailed Him as Christ the King saw that He did no miracle, but quietly submitted to indignities, capture, mockery, they felt like men who had been deceived into acts of undeserved honor, and turning against Him revengeful, they broke into the cry, "Crucify him, Crucify him!" *A. M. Fairbairn, Studies in the Life of Christ.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

16. *I will chastise him.* Roman scourging was a fearful punishment. The entire body was bared, the lashes were given without number. In this case it was inflicted by soldiers, and the whips were thongs with lead or bones attached. The prisoner was usually bound in a stooping posture so that the skin of the back was stretched tightly; as their backs were flayed by the process, they frequently fainted, and sometimes died. *Philip Schaff.*



A Roman Scourge

16. *Release him.* It was the time for him to release a prisoner to them, according to an obscure custom, which some suppose to have sprung from the release of one of the two sacrificial goats, and others from the fact that they now celebrated their own deliverance from Egypt. *G. A. Chadwick.*

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. In the eventful morning, Pilate heard a great tumult outside the city walls, and he was at once alert, for he was responsible for the welfare of the city, and would have to give account to the authorities at Rome. Messengers came in with urgent request for his presence in the Hall of Judgment. Immediately he went, and on entering, a wondrous scene presented itself. Though it was still in the early morning, a vast crowd had collected and was shouting, "Crucify him, Crucify him"; their shouts referring to one who was bound a prisoner in their midst. The silence of the One was in strange contrast with the noise and tumults of the others. Matthew tells us that the silence of Jesus made Pilate wonder. *J. Wesley Johnston.*

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For Older Pupils. The Hebrews had for centuries been hoping, dreaming, and talking of a Messiah. At last their Messiah came. How did they receive Him? With yells of "Crucify!" At the cross of Jesus, which consummated their iniquity, the story of their nation ends. After-history only shows how the wings of every vulture flap over the corpse of a nation that has fallen into moral death. Some of those who shared in the scene of Christ's crucifixion, and myriads of their children, shared also in the long horror of the siege of Jerusalem by the Romans—a siege which, for its unutterable fearfulness, stands unparalleled in the story of mankind. They had shouted, "We have no king but Cæsar!" and they had no king but Cæsar. Cæsar after Cæsar outraged and pillaged them till at last their Cæsars slaked in the blood of its defenders the red ashes of their desecrated temple. They had forced the Romans to crucify their Christ, and they themselves were crucified in myriads outside their walls, till room failed for their crosses, and wood to make them with.

Retribution still follows the nation of Christ's crucifiers. The Jews are an ostracized race in the midst of humanity the world over. Carlyle puts it thus: "Honor Barabbas the robber and thou shalt sell old clothes through the cities of the world, shalt accumulate sordid moneys, with a curse on every coin of them, and shalt be spurned for eighteen hundred years." *David Gregg.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. The Character of Pilate

The Tragedy of Weakness. In one breath Pilate declared Jesus innocent, and proposed to treat Him as guilty, offering to release Him as a boon to the Jews. A weaker proposal could scarcely have been made. There was nothing, absolutely nothing, to induce the Jews to accept it, but in making it he showed a disposition to treat with them—a disposition they did not fail to make abundant use of in succeeding scenes of this disgraceful day. Had he acted as any upright judge would have acted, and at once put his prisoner beyond reach of their hatred, they would have shrunk like cowed wild beasts; but his first concession put him in their power, and from this point onward there is exhibited one of the most lamentable spectacles in history—a man in power tossed like a ball between his convictions and his fears; a Roman not without a certain doggedness and cynical hardness that often pass for strength of character, but held up here to view as a sample of the weakness that results from a vain attempt to satisfy both what is bad and what is good in us. *Marcus Dods.*

Other Pilates. Pilate wanted to be just and the condemner of the Just One at the same time. Saul divided his heart between the commands of God on the one side, and his own pride and the popular voice

on the other. Balaam divided himself between the fear of God and respect for man, and wanted to do wrong with God's permission. Ananias and Sapphira wanted to have all the religious satisfaction of giving their money away, and all the worldly satisfaction of keeping it. Scripture in various places warns us against this midway and unsettled habit of mind, and urges decision as absolutely necessary to keep us out of evil. *J. B. Mozley.*

Pilate's Opposites. Had Martin Luther been a man of Pilate's type, there would never have been a Reformation; but when it came to a question of principle, he said, "Here I stand; I can go no farther; God help me. Amen!" and in standing just where he did he gave Protestantism to Europe. And you will find that every great leader, every bold reformer, every noble character who has helped the world by his life and example, has had some critical hour when he had to make a choice, and then follow out his course irrespective of consequence or result. *J. Wesley Johnston.*

Like other gently nurtured Boston boys, Wendell Phillips began the study of law. Doubtless the sirens sang to him, as to the noble youth of every country and time. Musing over Coke and Blackstone, perhaps he saw himself succeeding Ames and Otis and Webster, the idol of society, the applauded orator, the brilliant champion of the elegant ease, and the cultivated conservatism of man. . . . But one October day he saw an American citizen assailed by a furious mob in the city of James Otis for saying with James Otis that a man's right to liberty is inherent and inalienable. As the jail doors closed upon Garrison to save his life, Garrison and his cause had won their most powerful and renowned ally. With the setting of that October sun, vanished for ever the career of a prosperous ease, the gratification of ordinary ambitions, which the genius and accomplishments of Wendell Phillips had seemed to foretell. Yes, the long-awaited client had come at last. Scarred, scorned and forsaken, that cowering and friendless client was wronged and degraded humanity. The great soul saw and understood. *George William Curtis.*

II. Evil Compromising

Our Liability to Evil Compromising. Joseph Parker, commenting on the compromise of Joseph's brothers, who decided not to slay Joseph but to sell him into captivity, says: "I am struck by this circumstance, namely, how possible it is to fall from a rough kind of vice, such as 'Let us slay our brother,' into a milder form of iniquity, such as 'Let us sell our brother,' and to think that now we have actually come into a state of virtue. That is to say, selling as contrasted with slaying seems so moderate and amiable a thing as actually to amount to a kind of virtue. Observe, the morality has not been changed, only the point in the scale has been lowered. When God comes to judge the world He will not

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say, 'Is this virtue and water? is this diluted vice?' but 'Is this right? is this wrong?'"

One Who Would Not Compromise. In 1845, when traveling as a circuit preacher, the Reverend W. H. Milburn was sent from St. Louis to Wheeling, West Virginia. On the boat were several congressmen going to Washington, some of whom shocked the young minister by their reckless speech and habits.

One of the days of the long river journey was Sunday, and Mr. Milburn was asked to preach. The offending congressmen were present to hear him, and at the close of an appropriate discourse he addressed them directly, and solemnly denounced their action in the plainest language. He told them that he had supposed that the representatives of the nation at its capital were representatives of its character as well as of its intellect, but "If I am to judge the nation by you," said he, "I can come to no other conclusion than that it is composed of profane swearers, card-players and drunkards."

The same day Mr. Mulburn was waited upon in his state-room by a gentleman who presented a purse—about seventy-five dollars—from the congressmen, in token of their "sense of his courage and faithfulness," and desired to know if he would allow them to present his name at the opening election of chaplain to Congress.

Blind Chaplain Milburn obtained this honorable post through his fearlessness in his sacred profession and his loyalty to truth and duty. *Youth's Companion.*

No Neutrals in Christ's Kingdom. Christ's kingdom leaves no room for neutrals to stand on. A neutral is just a *neither;* he is neither for nor against; he wishes to be neither for Christ nor against Him. In ancient Greece and Rome the man who was a neutral in the time of war was declared to be infamous and was made an outcast and an outlaw. Near Niagara there lived, in the time of the Red Indians, a tribe which was called "The Neutral Nation," but the tribes on both sides of them rose against them and swept them clean away. The kingdom of Christ makes no provision for neutrals, for it claims all. *James Wells.*

Whom Will You Serve? An appeal was made to a Scottish regiment at Windsor for volunteers for the Ashantee War. The officer asked the volunteers to step forward. He left them for a few minutes till they had decided, and when he came back they were all standing in a line. "What!" he exclaimed in great astonishment, "are there no volunteers?" He was then told that, on the contrary, every man in the regiment had volunteered.

Christ's army is made up of volunteers, that is, *willers,* people who have a will and use it well. There are no forced recruits in the sacred army who do God's will. You may reject this service, you may, for you have a will of your own. But you must serve: whose servant will you be? *James Wells.*

III. Responsibility Can Not Be Evaded

Pilate's Attempt. Pilate washed his hands before the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it." For Pilate to seek to lay the blame on those who made it difficult to do the right thing is both unmanly and futile. If we have sinned, it only adds to our guilt and encourages our weakness to profess innocence now and transfer to some other party the disgrace that belongs to ourselves. Nothing short of physical compulsion can excuse wrong-doing. *Marcus Dods.*

Where the Fault Lay. The Harvard and Yale men had just rowed a celebrated race. Yale had won. At the Harvard boat-house a great company of students were talking with the oarsmen and trying to account for the defeat. One man blamed the coach. Another felt that the shell was not built right. John Doe was confident that the stroke had been too long, and Richard Roe was sure it was not long enough. At last one of the Harvard crew spoke out: "I know why we were beaten"—everybody listened—"we didn't row so fast as they did." Every Yale man and every other man would love him for the frank admission that the fault was not in the coach, nor the oars, nor their stars, but in themselves. *Charles R. Brown.*

A Hard Lesson. One spring a club of mine started to play base-ball in the crowded streets where they lived. I deliberately pretended not to know it, for I had not the heart to stop what seemed to give so much pleasure and do so little damage, principle or no principle. But the boys had a guilty conscience about it. They came to me at last and said, "Please tell us whether it is right to play base-ball in the streets." My sympathies were entirely with the boys, so I never felt so mean as when making the answer which it seemed to me right to make. "Boys," I said, "why do you ask me whether it is right or wrong to play ball in the streets? You know as well as I do what laws and ordinances are made for, and you know there is an ordinance against ball-playing in the streets of New York. However, if you choose to play, there is little danger for you, as it is easy to evade the policemen, and as for me, I shall never know whether you continue to play or not, for I am going home this minute. You must decide what is right yourselves and then live up to it or not, as you like." I shall never forget the despairing faces that were turned to me as I started to leave. "Oh, Miss Buck," they said, "if you would only forbid us to do it, it would be so much easier." *Winifred Buck.*

Dodging Responsibility. The habit of helplessness begins early. It grows, and with many men becomes fixed before the voting age. The first symptom is the dodging of responsibility, the effort to unload upon somebody else. If you have concluded to join the helpless class, I will tell you how to go about it.

In business, let the others do all the thinking and planning. Let your wheel run along in the first rut you happen to strike into.

If still in school, study with sole reference to getting through. When the spring fever comes, and studies are wearisome, urge the question of giving up school and "going into business."

In the home, let father or mother or brother do every helpful thing, you throwing yourself a dead weight on the others to be carried. In church take the backmost seat. Let others plan and execute every thing. Idly, feebly, look on. Wonder how it is done if it succeeds; criticize if it fails. Let the saloon or the corrupt gang rule, because it takes thought and effort to down them. To think out your own opinions in public affairs and to act upon them ought not to be expected if you have dedicated your life to a career of helplessness. *Archer Brown.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Pilate's past history made him powerless. *Marcus Dods.*

The soul grows by the right use of the power of choice. *A. H. Bradford.*

No man who has known Christ, may escape a decision regarding Him. *George Adam Smith.*

To see Christ in the glories of His character is to be prostrate before Him in adoration. *G. Campbell Morgan.*

Pilate failed to take into account the common principle that when you have wrongfully injured a man, you hate him all the more. *Marcus Dods.*

He who goes about mourning and saying, "It is too bad, but I can do nothing to remedy it"—he is a Pilate. *Henry Ward Beecher.*

God educates man by giving him complete charge over himself and setting him on "the bare back of his own will," leaving him to break it by his own strength. *Newell Dwight Hillis.*

An existence, like ours, which is a constant choice between good and evil, is throughout a probation: our character is but the stamp on our souls of the free choice of good or evil we have made through life. *Cunningham Geikie.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel. Prov. 12.10.

Consider mine enemies; for they are many; and they hate me with cruel hatred. Psa. 25.19.

Ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the Prince of life. Acts 3.14.

For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the peoples of

Israel, were gathered together for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. Acts 4.27, 28.

Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. Acts 2.23.

The fear of man bringeth a snare. Prov. 29.25.

And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; . . . as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. Josh. 24.15.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Nothing could save Pilate from the responsibility attaching to his connection with Jesus, and nothing can save us from the responsibility of determining what judgment we are to pronounce on this same Person.

Christ stands patiently awaiting our decision, maintaining His inalienable majesty, but submitting Himself to every test we care to apply, claiming only to be the King of the truth by which we are admitted into that sole eternal kingdom. It has come to be our turn, as it came to be Pilate's, to decide upon His claims and to act upon our decision. *Marcus Dods.*

THE LESSON SUMMARY

Pilate still had Jesus on his hands, his effort to shift the responsibility to Herod having failed. He went again to the palace gate and there called together not only the members of the Sanhedrim, but the people as well. To them all he gave as his decision that both he and Herod had found no fault in Jesus touching those things whereof they accused Him; he would therefore chastise Him and let Him go.

Pilate then appealed to the people, for he knew that for envy the chief-priests had accused Jesus; surely the people, who had "heard Him gladly," would prefer the release of Jesus to that of Barabbas (for of necessity he must release some one to them at the feast, according to custom). He was greatly troubled by his own conviction of the innocence of Jesus and also by the warning of his wife, who had sent to him this message, "Have thou nothing to do with that just man; for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him." The priests, however, as Matthew says, seized this opportunity to "persuade the people," till they shouted "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!"

Again, a third time, and yet oftener, as John 19.4-16 shows, Pilate declared that he would release Jesus. What a spectacle was this, Pilate, the man in authority, knowing the right, and yet almost begging the people to let him do the right!

John tells us that Pilate had Jesus scourged, as he suggested, and then

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brought Him before the people saying, "Behold the man!" If he hoped that the sight of the suffering Christ would appease the angry crowd, he was mistaken, for they but renewed with greater vehemence their cry of "Crucify Him, Crucify Him." Then they brought a personal motive to bear on Pilate. "If thou release this man, thou art not Cæsar's friend." What was one innocent man's life worth when weighed in the balance with the self-interest of a weak, unscrupulous man? Pilate took water and washed his hands in the presence of the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just Person: see ye to it." Then answered all the people, "His blood be on us and on our children." He then ordered Barabbas to be released, and Jesus to be delivered to their will.

Behold the Man
(From a painting by Hoffmann)

Six years later Pilate was accused of the very thing he sought to avoid by crucifying Jesus. The Roman Emperor deprived him of his office, and in his despair he took his own life.

There are four words in the Apostles' Creed that tell the lesson story—"Suffered under Pontius Pilate." This trial was doubtless a trifle to Pilate at the time, he probably made no reference to it in his despatches to Rome, and little thought that his infamous conduct was doomed to such immortality, as century after century these words of the Creed have been repeated.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Mob Rule.

2. The greatest of all instances of God's bringing good out of evil is the fact that because of Judas, Caiaphas, and Pilate, the Divine Redeemer was lifted up that He might draw all men unto Himself. *John A. Broadus.*

3. A man feebly anxious to do right may be sorely embarrassed by previous wrong-doing.

4. A Pilate is a man who believes in letting things have their own way. Do not sacrifice yourself. Do not get in the way of the movement. Live in peace with your time. Be not like the fool, who stands in his

own light. Maintain good appearances, that is profitable. Study the interest of Number One all through. Do not be too scrupulous. Be just enough so to gain your ends. Use men, use events, use everything that is profitable. Do not use your conscience too much. *Henry Ward Beecher.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Who carried Jesus' cross to Calvary? (Luke 23.26.) 2. What was the last message of Jesus to the women of Jerusalem? (Luke 23.27-31.) 3. How do we know that Jesus was nailed to the cross instead of being bound by thongs, as was sometimes done? (John 20.25, 27; Luke 24.39.) 4. What change did the Jews wish Pilate to make in the inscription over the cross? (John 19.21.) Why? What was Pilate's answer? (John 19.22.) 5. What friends stood by Jesus? (John 19.25-27.) 6. What prophecy was fulfilled by the casting of lots for His seamless robe? (Psa. 22.18.) 7. What is the significance of the rending of the veil of the temple? 8. Make a list of the Seven Words from the cross in the order in which they were uttered. (Luke 23.34; Luke 23.43; John 19.26, 27; Matt. 27.46 or Mark 15.34; John 19.28; John 19.30; and Luke 23.46.) 9. What is the gospel record of Nicodemus? (John 3.1-13; John 7.50, 51; John 19.38-42.) 10. Read the ninth chapter of Hebrews. 11. Read the four gospel accounts of the crucifixion, and write a complete account. Read the narratives in this order: Mark 15.16-47; Matt. 27.27-66; Luke 23.26-56; John 19.17-42.

BETWEEN LESSON IX AND LESSON X

The soldiers gathered about Jesus, clothed Him with a purple robe, put a crown of thorns on His head and a reed in His hand, and bowed before Him, saying, "Hail, king of the Jews!" Then they spat on Him and struck Him. After all these cruel indignities, they led Him along The Sorrowful Way (Via Dolorosa) toward Golgotha. At first Jesus bore His own cross, according to custom, but soon they compelled a chance traveler, Simon of Cyrene, to carry it after Him.

With them went a great multitude. To the weeping women about Him Jesus said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for Jerusalem and for your children." (Matt. 27.26-32; Mark 15.15-23; Luke 23.26-33; John 19.1-17.)

LESSON X—DECEMBER 9

JESUS ON THE CROSS

Luke 23.33-46. (Read Matt. 27.38-66; Mark 15.24-47; Luke 23.26-32.) Commit vv. 42, 43.

Golden Text

Father forgive them, for they know not what they do. Luke 23.34.

Time: Friday, 9 A. M.–3 P. M., April 7, A. D. 30.
Place: Golgotha. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 86 and 121–123.

LESSON TEXT. LUKE 23.33–46

33 And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left.
34 Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.
35 And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided *him,* saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God.
36 And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar,
37 And saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself.
38 And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.
39 And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.
40 But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?
41 And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.
42 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.
43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.
44 And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour.
45 And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst.
46 And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

33. *Calvary,* R. V., *The Skull.* The Greek word κρανίον is a translation of the Hebrew *Golgotha,* as *Calvary* is the translation of the Latin *Calvarium.* All these words mean *The Skull.* The traditional site is within the city walls, about a quarter of a mile west from the northwest corner of the temple, near the present Church of the Holy Sepulcher; recent scholars accept as the true site a knoll, shaped like a skull, outside the city on the north side near St. Stephen's gate. The road along which Jesus passed on His way to Calvary is known as the *Via Dolorosa, The Way of Sorrow.*

Via Dolorosa

34. *Father forgive them.* The first of the "Seven Words" from the cross. *They parted His raiment, and cast lots.* They divided His raiment by casting lots.

41. *He hath done nothing amiss.* The expression here answers nearly to our familiar phrase, "He has done nothing out of the way." *Vincent.*

43. *Paradise.* The word is Greek, derived from the Persian, and was applied to kings' courts and grounds, places of beauty and delight. It is used in the *Septuagint* for *garden,* in Gen. 2.8, where we read that God planted a Paradise in Eden. The word occurs but three times in our Bible; here and in 2 Cor. 12.4 and Rev. 2.7. The idea of paradise in the common popular belief was that of a far-off land of rest and peace, a region of the world of the dead. *Baugher.*

44. *It was about the sixth hour.* The darkness lasted from noon, or the sixth hour, till three P. M., or the ninth hour.

46. *Gave up the ghost.* This translates one word in the Greek, *expired.* The word *ghost* originally meant *breath, wind,* and later came to mean *spirit.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

33. *They crucified him.* Several years ago the Seaman's Home in Liverpool was in flames. Those on the upper floors were cut off from the stairways by the blinding smoke and leaping fire, and the fire escape

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did not reach the windows where they gathered. There was no hope anywhere, when a young man dashed through the crowd, grasped a ladder, and made his way to the top of the fire escape. Then, raising the ladder over his head till it reached the window sill above, he braced himself as with the strength of a giant, and there he stood while the hapless men and boys made their way down that ladder over his body, and by an act which made all England ring with his praises, saved them every one.

But what if, when he came to the ground, he had been spurned, spat upon, made sport of, and finally trampled under feet, his life blood bespattering the very stones where he had saved the others? Would the world ever forgive such a shame and degradation? And yet all this, and infinitely more, is implied in the word Jesus. The very world which He came to save, in order to show its hatred and cruelty, crucified Him between two common thieves. *J. Wesley Johnston.*

34. *Father, forgive them.* The day before his execution John Brown wrote to his family: "To-day is my last day on earth. To-morrow I shall see God. And I can say the words of our blessed Saviour: 'Father, forgive them; they know not what they do.'"

35. *And the rulers also with them derided him.* The derision of the Sanhedrists had a special motive. The place of crucifixion was close to the great road which led from the north to Jerusalem. The words describing the sufferer as the King of the Jews might, when taken in connection with what was known of Jesus, have raised most dangerous questions among those who passed in and out of the city. And this the presence of the Sanhedrists was intended to prevent, by turning the popular mind in a totally different direction. *Edersheim, Life of Christ.*

44. *Darkness over all the earth.* It seems only in accordance with the Evangelic narrative to regard the occurrence of the event as supernatural, while the event itself might have been brought about by natural causes; and among these we must call special attention to the earthquake in which this darkness terminated. For, it is a well-known phenomenon that such darkness not unfrequently precedes earthquakes. The language of the Evangelists seems to imply that this darkness extended, not only over the land of Israel, but over the habited earth. The expression must, of course, not be pressed to its full literality, but explained that many thought it extended far beyond Judea and to other lands. *Alfred Edersheim.*

45. *The veil of the temple was rent.* Do we always remember why the priests encompassed the death of Christ? Watch carefully the history, and notice that their trouble was that they were losing their power, and their constant question was, What shall we do? The people were slipping away from their grip, but at last they have put an end to His influence, they have Him now nailed to the cross, and by His destruction they secure their own power. O blind men, infatuated men! While they gloat over their fancied victory, God rends the veil of the temple in twain, and for evermore does away with the priest. Just as they thought they had se-

cured their dominance of humanity by crucifying Him, He by His dying spoiled their power, rent the veil, and by abolishing the priest, created the priesthood of all believers. *G. Campbell Morgan.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

33. *They crucified him.* The peculiar Jewish punishment was stoning. The law commands particularly that any prophet or false teacher who should turn away the people from the law of Moses should be stoned without a hearing. . . . The cross was introduced into Palestine by the Romans. In Italy, the punishment was only inflicted on slaves and for crimes against the state, or when special infamy was to be attached to the death; otherwise the condemned were slain by the sword. But in Palestine, the Romans thought little of crucifying Jews. Did they not belong to a despised race, a race of slaves? *Edmond Stapfer.*

38. *In letters of Greek and Latin and Hebrew.* Latin was the language of the Roman dwellers in the cities and garrisons, the publicans, the soldiers and the tax-gatherers. It was a despised tongue. The Jews never spoke it. The centurion and the four soldiers who were charged with the execution of Jesus were possibly the only ones to understand the Latin inscription on the cross.

Hebrew the people no longer spoke. That part of Pilate's inscription said to have been in Hebrew must have undoubtedly been Chaldee, also called Aramaic or Syriac, for the old Hebrew language had fallen into disuse except among the scribes and doctors of the law. The law was read in Hebrew in the synagogues and immediately afterward translated aloud, for the difference between Hebrew and Chaldee was so great that the people did not understand the law unless it was translated. In the schools the rabbis taught in Hebrew, and under the porch in the first temple court they carried on discussions in the same tongue.

The Greek language was more than despised in Palestine in the first century; it was execrated. . . . This passage from the Talmud has often been quoted: "He who teaches his son Greek is accursed like him who keeps pigs." Herod the Great had among his troops Thracians, Germans, and Gauls. These men must have spoken Greek more or less; and in some cities inhabited by Gentiles, like Cæsarea and Scythopolis, it was needful to speak Greek in order to be understood at all. *Stapfer.*

44. *About the sixth hour.* The Jewish day was from sunrise to sunset, and the night from sunset to sunrise. Each day and each night was divided into twelve equal parts. Thus an hour was not a fixed time as with us. When the days were long, the hours of the day were long and the hours of night short; when the days were short, the reverse was true. Only twice a year, at the autumnal and vernal equinoxes, when day and night are equal, did the length of their hours correspond with ours. The passover was celebrated at the vernal equinox.

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45. *The veil of the temple.* A high wall on the western side of the Court of the Women (see page 419) shut off the Court of the Israelites. Within the latter court, surrounded by a low wall, was the Court of the Priests. Here was the great altar of burnt offerings, and here rose the temple itself. The Holy Place within the temple, sixty by thirty feet, held the golden candle-sticks, the table of shew bread, and the altar of incense. A heavy veil shut off the Holy of Holies, which only the high priest could enter, and he only once a year. "According to Jewish tradition," says Edersheim, in his *Life of Christ,* "there were two veils before the entrance to the Most Holy Place. They were forty cubits (sixty feet) long and twenty (thirty feet) wide, of the thickness of the palm of the hand, and wrought in seventy-two squares, which were joined together; and these veils were so heavy that, in the exaggerated language of the time, it needed three hundred priests to manipulate each. If the veil was at all such as is described in the Talmud, it could not have been rent in twain by a mere earthquake or the fall of the lintel, although its composition in squares fastened together might explain how the rent might be as described in the Gospels."

46. *He gave up the ghost.* The Roman law permitted and even commanded that the body of an executed man must be delivered to any one who claimed it; and a certain Joseph of Arimathea begged the body from Pilate. It was the more readily acceded that he was a well-known personage, a member of the Sanhedrim, rich and esteemed. They desired to embalm the body, not according to the Egyptian manner, for indefinite preservation, but after the Jewish fashion, which consisted simply in wrapping it around with small bandages with myrrh and aloes. *Edmond Stapfer.*

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. A deaf and dumb boy was taught by a lady who could speak to him only by signs and pictures. She drew upon a paper a picture of a large crowd of people standing near a wide, deep pit, out of which smoke and flames were issuing. She then drew a figure to represent Jesus Christ. She explained to the boy that Christ agreed to be nailed to a cross for the people, and that as soon as He died on the cross the pit was shut up and the people saved.

The boy made signs for "one" and "many." The lady took off her gold ring and put it beside a great heap of withered flower leaves, and asked the boy which was the better, the one gold ring, or the many, many dried leaves. The boy clapped his hands with delight, and spelled "the one, one!" And then to show that he knew what this meant, and that Jesus was the One Who was worth all the rest, he spelled the words "Good, good One!" *A. A. Bonar.*

For Older Pupils. In a lonely valley in Switzerland a small band

of patriots once marched against an invading force ten times their strength. They found themselves one day at the head of a narrow path, confronted by a solid wall of spears. They made assault after assault, but that bristling line remained unbroken. The forlorn hope rallied for the last time. As they charged, their leader suddenly advanced before them with outstretched arms, and every spear for three or four yards of the line was buried in his body. Through the open breach, over his dead body, they rushed to victory and won the freedom of their country.

So Jesus went before His people, the Captain of our salvation, sheathing the weapons of death and judgment in Himself, and preparing a place for us with His dead body. Well for us not only that He went away, but that He went by way of the cross. *Henry Drummond.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. The Reason for the Cross

Theories of the Atonement. The best definition of the word *atonement* is obtained by breaking it into its syllables thus, *at-one-ment.* Our atonement with God is our being made at one with Him, reconciled with Him. How does Jesus Christ effect this? This is the problem of theology. But belief in the atonement does not wholly depend on our understanding it, any more than belief and feeling that the sun shines depends upon our knowing just how it shines. Let us look, however, for a moment at the various theories of Atonement.

1. The first theory is that of the satisfaction of divine justice by Christ's death. We, for our sins, owed a debt to divine justice that we could not pay except by eternal death. But our death, of course, would prevent our salvation, and so Jesus took our place, discharged our obligation by the sacrifice of Himself, and so reconciled Himself to God. This is the "substitutionary view."

2. The second conception of the mode of the Atonement is known as the "governmental theory." . . . The points of this theory are about as follows:

(a) Man has sinned and thrown the world into confusion, by transgressing the laws of God's government.

(b) God wants to forgive him, and to take less than exact justice from him; but this is not safe, unless He can some way teach man that sin is a dreadful thing, destructive of the moral order and government of the universe.

(c) Christ proffers Himself to die, to impress upon man the fact that law must be upheld, and God is satisfied to accept the offer.

The whole transaction is not so much to have exact justice done, as to make it safe to pardon man. So we are to look upon the Atonement as a governmental expedient by which God shows man His hatred of sin, and at the same time saves us.

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3. The third notion we call the "Moral Influence View of the Atonement." According to this view, man is estranged from God by his ignorance of morality, and all he needs is to have a flawless example and a perfect teacher and he will be won to righteousness, and so reconciled to God. Christ came to be that teacher, and to draw men to duty by the excellence of His example. He died at last as a model of devotion to duty. . . .

Suppose we should unite these views in the form of a personal confession of faith in the Atonement, it would be something like this:

(a) I believe Christ died and satisfied the penalty of divine justice against my sins. (b) I believe He thereby declared God's holiness and upheld His government. (c) I believe He taught me by His example and words how to live as a worthy subject of God's kingdom, into which His atonement introduced me. *J. C. Jackson, in The Treasury.*

The Atonement a Fact. A student went to a professor of theology not long ago, and asked him how long it took him to understand the Atonement. The professor thought a minute, then looked him in the face. "Eternity," he said, "eternity; and I won't understand it then."

We are dealing with facts; we need not be distressed if we do not understand them. God's love—how could we? God's forgiveness—how could we? *Henry Drummond, The Ideal Life.*

II. The Sacrifice of the Cross

The Value of the Sacrifice. There are sometimes rare and beautiful wares brought into the market that are invoiced at almost fabulous prices. Ignorant people wonder why they are priced so high. The simple reason is that they cost so much to produce. That luxurious article labeled two hundred dollars was procured by the adventurous hunter who, at the hazard of his neck, brought down the wild mountain goat, out of whose glossy hair the fabric was wrought. Yonder pearl that flashes on the brow of the bride is precious because it was rescued from the great deep at the risk of the pearl fisher's life, as he was lifted into the boat half dead, with the blood gushing from his nostrils.

So it is, too, in Heaven's inventories. The universe of God has never witnessed aught to be reckoned in comparison with the redemption of the guilty world. *Theodore L. Cuyler.*

The Purpose of the Sacrifice. Suppose that you are rowing a boat on a river, in no danger of any kind. A friend comes down to the shore and hails you; he tells you that he intends to give his life for you. So he throws himself into the water and is drowned. Are you impressed with gratitude and love? Is the evidence of devotion so manifest and indubitable that you can not doubt it? Does it not seem more like a vain show of heroism, a display made not so much for your sake as for the sake of him who made it?

But if your boat had been sinking? Ah, then it would have been an-

other matter. The man who gives up his life to rescue you from an actual peril, commands your love because he is your savior. The crown of love is service. The glory of love is usefulness. The love of Christ, the sacrifice of Christ, draw their deepest power upon the inner life of man from the conviction that they really have accomplished the deliverance for sinners from the guilt and curse and doom of sin. *Henry van Dyke, The Gospel for a World of Sin.*

One Lesson of the Sacrifice. In Christian service there must be sacrifice. It is the law of Christian life. Now and then we have been thrilled by tales of shipwreck, in which the officers held the deck till all beside were in the boats, going down when the vessel foundered. The officers—theirs were the most valuable lives! "To what purpose is this waste?" Our hearts supply the answer. Only a dastard would count his life dearer than the life of the meanest man, the weakest woman, the tiniest child. And when the unwritten history of lifelong sacrifices shall be revealed, we shall applaud the record. The gifted are not to enjoy their gifts, but lay them out for the service of the undistinguished; he who refrains from employing any power he has, because in the employment he wastes himself, will awake to shame and everlasting contempt. *Alexander MacKenna.*

III. The Power of the Cross

All Sins May be Forgiven. In the cross I see my sin. In the cross I see God's grace. And, hear me, His grace is mightier than my sin, for "where sin abounded grace did abound more exceedingly." Did you ever watch the children playing on the sea-shore? I ask this little group what they are doing, and they tell me that they are digging a big hole. What for, I say to them, and they reply, We want to see if the sea can fill it. The hole is dug, and the bairns stand on the mounds of sand, and I wait with them. We wait and watch and wonder as the waves come nearer in, and at last one, stronger and bigger than its brothers, breaks up and over the hole with the sweet swish of summer music, and I look and they look. What has happened? Is the hole filled? More exceedingly, more exceedingly! And the sea is yet behind! Where sin abounded grace did abound more exceedingly. *G. Campbell Morgan.*

Jesus is Not Dead. Doctor Pentecost tells an incident that occurred at the close of one of his meetings in Aberdeen, Scotland. One or two men lingered to talk with him, when he noticed a barefooted Scotch lassie beside him. The hour was late, and Doctor Pentecost said to her, "Why don't you go home?" "Eh, mon, I want to get saved," she answered. "Do you think I can save you?" asked Doctor Pentecost. "Na, na, you canna, but Jesus can." "What has Jesus done to save you?" the Doctor then asked. "He died for me." "Oh, then, He's dead, is He?" said Doctor Pentecost, wishing to try her faith. "Na, na, He's no deid.

Dinna fash me, mon, He's no deid. He died for me, but He's alive up yonder. He can save me. Oh, mon, I want to get saved!" "The little one grasped the whole situation," adds Doctor Pentecost. "Jesus died for her, but He is not dead, and He is able to save to the uttermost every one that comes to God by Him."

I, if I be Lifted Up from the Earth, Will Draw All Men Unto Me. In the Düsseldorf Gallery there are two paintings—one of the Saviour on the cross, the other of a gypsy girl. This touching story is told about them. The same artist painted both, and when the gypsy girl was sitting for him her eyes were always fastened on the painting of the Christ. Finally she asked him, "Master, who is that?"

"That is Jesus Christ, Son of Mary," he replied.

"But was he a bad man that they treated him so cruelly?"

"Oh, no! He was the best man that ever lived."

"Tell me about Him." Unwillingly the artist told her all he knew. As the girl was leaving for the last time she said, "Master, how can you help loving Him, Who, you say, has died for you? If anybody had loved me like that, O, I'd like to die for Him!" The words struck home. He sued and obtained pardon for his years of knowing negligence of his Saviour.

SENTENCE SERMONS

If the life of Christ be not your pattern, the death of Christ will never be your pardon. *Selected.*

The shadow of the cross is like the shadow of the sun, the light and life of the world. *Fairbairn.*

To rise to the Mount of Beatitudes in our life, we must go to Mount Calvary for our life. *Philip Schaff.*

Christ's work is finished, but His working is unfinished and perpetually in progress. *Arthur T. Pierson.*

All the doors that lead inward to the secret place of the most High are doors outward—out of self, out of smallness, out of wrong. *George Macdonald.*

As Jesus is right in the midst of men, as they touch Him, they either break into penitence, or are hardened into impenitence. *Fairbairn.*

Ask from Christ His spirit of the cross for our daily life—habitual patience, self-restraint, self-forgetfulness, charity, and tenderness for others. *George Adam Smith.*

The death of Christ would have been of no avail for the redemption of the world, had it not been preceded by His perfect life. *Morgan.*

As Christian came up with the cross, his burden loosed from off his shoulders, and began to tremble, till at the mouth of the sepulcher it fell in: then was Christian glad, and said, "He hath given me life by His death." *Bunyan.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, he died for us. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. John 15.13.

Having boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high-priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith. Heb. 10.19-22.

Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. 1 Pet. 2.24.

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Phil. 2.5-11.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

We love to think of what the other world may have in store for such lives as the penitent thief's—lives whose dying was the beginnig of living. But we never think of such lives as more than exceptions. They are poor makeshifts after all. It is for such as you, young men and women with a full, fresh life to give, that giving the life to God really means something great and beautiful.

Think what it means. To take all those powers that are just opened or just opening, and say: "All these shall be used for doing, not what I want, but what God wants. If my wants and His wants disagree, I will defeat myself to serve Him until, as I grow like Him, my wants and His wants come to be the same, and thenceforth I shall serve myself in serving Him. This I will do because He is my Father, and has shown me His love by Jesus Christ, my Lord." *Phillips Brooks.*

THE LESSON SUMMARY

At Golgotha they crucified Jesus between two evil-doers. Above His cross Pilate had this inscription placed, in Greek and Latin and Hebrew: "This is the King of the Jews."

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"Write not, 'The king of the Jews,' but that he said, I am king of the Jews," begged the chief-priests; but Pilate, firm now that the occasion for firmness was passed, answered, "What I have written I have written."

To deaden the pain, they gave Jesus wine mixed with gall, but He refused it. "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do," was His first "word" on the cross. Some there were who watched and said nothing, many there were who mocked and derided Him, a few there were who wept, and one there was who cried, "Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." "Verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise," was Christ's answer to the penitent thief hanging beside Him.

The watching guard took His garments, each of the four taking one, and then cast lots for His coat that was without a seam.

"If thou art the king of the Jews, save thyself," said the soldiers; "If thou be Christ, save thyself and us," said one of the malefactors; "He saved others, himself he cannot save," said the chief-priest with the scribes and elders. To all alike He answered not a word. To His mother, Jesus said, "Behold thy son," and to John, the disciple whom He loved, "Behold thy mother!"

From the sixth to the ninth hour there was darkness, and at the ninth hour Jesus cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!" Forsaken by all, He cried to His Father, for in His anguish God Himself seemed veiled from Him. The needed strength came to the victorious Christ. "I thirst," He cried, and the grateful vinegar was given to Him. "It is finished." Then with a loud, triumphant voice He exclaimed, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit" And thus the Sinless One died for the sins of the world.

And behold the veil of the temple was rent in two from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake; and the rocks were rent; and the tombs were opened. Now the centurion and they that were with Him watching Jesus, when they saw the earth quake, and the things that were done, feared exceedingly, saying, "Truly this was the Son of God."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. There is no break in the continuity of the soul's existence, not even one parenthetic hour. When He Who was the Resurrection and the Life said, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise," that word passed on a forgiven soul directly to a state of conscious blessedness. *Henry Burton.*

2. That which has made the cross the most significant of earthly symbols is not the fact that it marked the keenest physical pain, but that it exhibits Christ's perfect and complete identification with sinful man. *Marcus Dods.*

3. Christ is crucified wherever His brethren are slain without pity; He

lies buried wherever man, made in His image, is entombed in ignorance, lest he should learn the rights his Divine Master gave him. *Oliver Wendell Holmes.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. With verse 3 compare the other descriptions of the angels within the sepulcher, in Mark 16.5; Luke 24.4; John 20.12. 2. Look up these references to Mary Magdalene: Mark 15.40, 47; 16.1, 9; Luke 8.2; 23.49, 55; 24.1, 10; Matt. 27.56, 61; John 19.25; 20.1, 11-18. What instances in the Old Testament of raising from the dead? (The son of the widow of Zarephath, 1 Kings 17.22; the Shunammite's son, 2 Kings 4.34, 35; the men cast into Elisha's sepulcher, 2 Kings 13.21.) 4. Whom did Christ raise from the dead? (Son of widow of Nain, Luke 7.14, 15; Jairus' daughter, Luke 8.54, 55; Lazarus, John 11.43, 44.) See also Matt. 27.52, 53; Acts 9.40; Acts 20.9-12. 5. How did Christ's resurrection differ from that of other resurrections recorded in the Bible? (The miracle was wrought by another in each of the other cases, while Christ wrought His own miracle. The others "were raised"; Christ "is risen." The others died again; Christ did not die, but ascended.) 6. Find several sayings of Christ in the Gospels that foretold His resurrection. (Matt. 16.21; 17.23; 20.19; John 10.17, 18.) 7. What was the purpose of Christ's death and resurrection? (Luke 24.46, 47.)

BETWEEN LESSON X AND LESSON XI

That the bodies might not remain on the crosses on the Sabbath, the Jews asked Pilate to have their legs broken and have them taken down. The soldiers broke the legs of the two evil-doers, but finding that Jesus was already dead, one of them thrust a spear through His side, and blood and water flowed from the wound.

Then came Joseph, a rich man of Arimathea, a member of the Sanhedrim, and asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Joseph and Nicodemus, "he who at the first came to Him by night," took the body, bound it in linen clothes with spices, and laid it in a new tomb, and rolled a stone against the door of the tomb.

Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of Jesus, beheld the tomb and saw how the body was laid, then they returned and prepared spices and ointment.

On the morrow the chief-priests and Pharisees asked Pilate to send a guard to the tomb, for "we remember," they said, "that that deceiver said while he was yet alive, 'After three days I rise again,' and the disciples may come and steal him away." "Go, make it as secure as you can," returned Pilate. They went and made the sepulcher sure, sealing the stone, the guard being with them. (Matt. 27.52-66; Mark 15.39-47; Luke 23.47-56; John 19.31-42.)

JESUS RISEN FROM THE DEAD

Matt. 28.1-15. (Read Mark 16.1-13; Luke 24.1-35.) Commit vv. 5, 6.

Golden Text

He is risen even as He said. Matt. 28.6.

Time: Sunday, April 9, A. D. 30.

Place: Sepulcher. Jerusalem. Geography Lesson, paragraphs 87 and 124.

LESSON TEXT. MATT. 28.1-15

1 In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first *day* of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.

2 And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.

3 His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow:

4 And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead *men*.

5 And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.

6 He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

7 And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you.

8 And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word.

9 And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him.

10 Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.

11 Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done.

12 And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers,

13 Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him *away* while we slept.

14 And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you.

15 So they took the money, and did as they were taught; and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *The end of the sabbath.* The Jewish Sabbath, or Saturday. *The other Mary.* Mary the mother of James, Mark 16.1. Mark also adds, "and Salome." *To see the sepulchre.* That they might come and anoint Him, Mark 16.1.

2. *Rolled back the stone from the door.* The stone was rolled away, not for the purpose of removing an obstruction to the passage of the Saviour, to whose glorified body well secured doors offered no hindrance (John 20.19, 26), but of exhibiting to His followers the empty grave. *Schaeffer.*

4. *The keepers.* The watchers, the guard mentioned in Matt. 27.65.

5. *The angel said.* Luke (24.4) mentions two angels. Matthew describes only the angel who spoke. *Fear not ye. Ye* is emphatic.

6. *Come and see the place.* John 20.5, 6 describes it.

7. *Tell his disciples.* Peter is especially remembered, Mark 16.7. *He goeth before you into Galilee; as he promised.* As recorded in Matt. 26.32. Compare John 10.4. The gathering of the flock in Galilee was a measure of prudence, to prevent persecution and to disassociate them from the old temple. *Schaff.*

8. *With fear and great joy.* This union of apparently opposite emotions is true to human nature. All powerful tides of gladness cause nervous thrills that feel like fear. *Bruce.*

12. *They.* The chief-priests. If the facts be made known publicly, the chief-priests can look for no other result than their own ruin. Compare Acts 4.2; 5.28. Consequently they are in the power of the keepers, and hence we hear of no rebukes or menaces addressed to the latter. *Schaeffer. Large money.* Silver pieces, shekels are meant. *Bruce.*

13. *While we slept.* Death was the penalty for falling asleep on the watch. An absurd statement, for if they were asleep they could not know what happened.

14. *We will persuade him.* A hint at further and costly bribery; for Pilate was avaricious and corrupt. But he may never have heard the story. *Schaff. Secure you.* The word *secure* is from the Latin *se=sine*, without, and *cura*, care. It has passed into the popular meaning of *to make safe.*

15. *This saying.* This report of the soldiers. *Until this day.* Until the time when Matthew's Gospel was written, probably thirty or forty years after the resurrection.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

1. *They came to see the sepulcher.* The simple Moravians of the wooded hillsides of Saxony keep still, at Herrnhut, their "watch of the Lord" with the earliest break of the Easter dawn, and sing, as in anticipa-

tion of the last and brightest Easter day, their sweet Easter hymns across the quiet graves of their friends awaiting, in "God's acre," the great Resurrection summons. *Thomas A. Guerney.*

5. *The angel.* On the stone there sat the angel. Two there had been—the angel at the head and the angel at the foot. Francesco Francia of old represented these two angels most exquisitely—one as the angel of the past, remembering grief, and the other as the angel of the future, only hoping for the time to come. And so one angelic form is sad, and the other is bright and radiant. *Henry Ward Beecher.*

7. *Tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead.* There is a beautiful custom in Moscow. As the bell of Ivan the Great tolls the hour of midnight, and the resurrection morn is ushered in, every man, woman, and child lights a candle, and each greets his neighbor with the words, "Christ is risen," and receives the response, "He is risen indeed." *Canadian Epworth Era.*

The First Appearance of Jesus. Opinions differ as to whether Christ appeared to Mary Magdalene alone and then to the women, or to the women together with Mary Magdalene. A satisfactory harmony of the events recorded by the different Evangelists is this: the three women (Matt. 28.1; Luke 24.10) came first to the tomb; Mary Magdalene left first, and meeting Peter and John, told them what had occurred (John 20.2); Peter and John went to the tomb (John 20.3-10); Mary Magdalene returned to the tomb alone and Christ appeared to her first of all (John 20.11-18); meanwhile the other Mary and Salome had gone to meet other women, and all returned together to the tomb, and Christ appeared to them (Luke 24.1-9).

The Date of Easter. Ever since the days of the apostles, probably, Easter has been observed by the Church. Very early a dispute arose as to what day should be celebrated as Easter Day. The Christians of the Eastern Church observed it on the same day that the Jews observed the Passover, the 14th day of Nisan, corresponding with our April. The Christians of the Western Church observed the day following the 14th of Nisan, because Christ's resurrection occurred on Sunday. The dispute grew very bitter. The differences in time amounted sometimes to a week, occasionally to a whole month.

At length Emperor Constantine called together the celebrated Ecumenical Council of Nice, A. D. 325, to settle this dispute (and other vexing questions), and this rule was passed which has ever since been observed:

Everywhere the great Feast of Easter shall be observed upon one and the same day; and that not the day of the Jewish Passover, but, as had been generally observed, on the Sunday afterward.

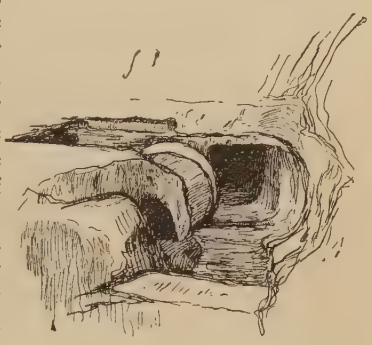
1. The 21st of March shall be accounted the Vernal Equinox.

2. The fourteenth day of the moon, happening upon or after the 21st of March, shall be taken for the full moon of Nisan.

3. The Lord's Day next following that full moon shall be Easter Day.
4. If the full moon happen on Sunday, Easter Day shall be the Sunday after.

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

2. *The stone.* The door might be rectangular and of solid stone, with a flange fitting into a socket for a hinge, both of the same material. Or it might be a cylindrical stone rolling in a groove to the right or left of the opening. Or there might be a regular door of stone supported by hinges, against which a stone was rolled for further protection. It is not possible to say with certainty which of these methods was followed in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea. The sealing of tombs appears to have been common throughout the East. Quite recently they have been found in Egypt, dating back to the time of the Exodus, with their seals still intact upon them. *Bissell, Biblical Antiquities.*



A Rock Tomb, with Stone Rolled Away

1. *The first day of the Week.* The Jews did not have particular names for the first six days of the week, but distinguished them merely by their order; thus, what we call Sunday was termed the first day of the week, Monday the second, Tuesday the third, and so of the rest. The seventh day, which we name Saturday, was styled among them the Sabbath, that is, the day of rest. *John W. Nevin.*

The Jews in their reckoning counted a part of a day as an entire day. Christ was crucified on the afternoon of Friday, and arose on the morning of Sunday, thus lying in the tomb three days according to their way of counting time.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. There is a little book, entitled *The Life Beyond,* that presents the truths of the resurrection in a wonderful manner. It is an allegory, and pretends to give the experience of a dragon-fly grub. The little insect longs to know what is beyond the sphere of its little world. In vain it inquires of the fish that inhabit the same pond. At length the grub is overcome by a strange attraction upward, and gathering about it all its fellows, it promises to return and tell them what it has found to exist in the beyond, if indeed there may be anything above the bulrushes of their little pond; and then quietly it disappears from the

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sight of its fellows, and emerges into the bright sunlight of the greater world. Here it is transformed, and now with outstretched wings it darts hither and thither, reflecting the brightness of the sun from its green body. But it does not forget the promises that it made to its friends. It tries to return to the world from which it has just been "resurrected," but it can not now leave the atmosphere in which it lives. All that it can do is to wait for them to come to where it now lives a beautiful dragon-fly. And thus it is with those who have disappeared from our sight. *Dwight L. Moody.*

For Older Pupils. We all know the effects of the Renaissance upon the modern world. Renaissance is rebirth, regeneration,—resurrection, if you like. The intellectual forces of the Middle Ages had spent themselves; the greater part of Europe was lying in a sleep which might almost be described as death. But when Constantinople was conquered by the Turks, many Greek scholars who had been working there had to flee to the shores of Italy, bringing with them Homer and Sophocles, Aristotle and Plato, the forgotten science and art and scholarship of the ancient world. And almost at the same time a new world of unexplored territory was revealed by explorers like Cabot and Columbus. And the result was the awaking of Europe from its death-like sleep, and the stirring of a new life that is not exhausted yet. These men, exiled scholars and brave explorers, were the Renaissance; they were the resurrection and life of European learning, because it was through them and their labors that the quickening came.

Now what these men did intellectually for Europe at one period, Christ came to do morally and spiritually for the world for all time. *J. M. E. Ross.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. All Must Die

Who Goes Home? In England when the House of Commons adjourns for the night, one of the officers always cries out, "Who goes home?" Nobody pays any attention to him, for all know that it is only a custom that has survived from the time when traveling was dangerous owing to footpads and lack of light, and members were wont to go home in companies attended by a boy bearing a light.

Who goes to the eternal home? Few pay any attention to this question either, and yet all know that it is not an empty formula. Many a one lives and talks as though he thought the summons would come to others, but not to himself. Henry Ward Beecher gave a striking illustration of this in the following incident:

"There were three of the class to which my father belonged in Yale who lived to be old men, and a few years ago, when my father was alive,

an old man, eighty years of age, infirm and quivering, came up to me, and said, 'Your father and Staples and I were in the same class. Staples is dying in New York, and when your father dies I wish you would tell me. I shall then be the remnant of the class.' Everybody but he, he thought, was going to die! There was no consciousness in his mind that he was to go. And so we train ourselves, by habitual inconsideration, to the vague feeling that there is an endless period of time still lying before us."

Knowing and Realizing that We Must Die. It is no matter of uncertainty to every one of us whether he himself shall die. He knows it. Which of us realizes it? Who can shut his eyes and bring it before him as a reality?

Out of the grave we shall arise again. Each one in his own proper identity, his very self, shall see God, and be seen by Him—looking out upon a strange new scene, and doomed to be an actor in it for all eternity. We all know that—on which one of our hearts is it stamped, not as a doctrine to be proved by texts, but as one of the things which must be hereafter, and in sight of which we are to live now?

One way for realizing these things is meditation. No one forgets what his mind has long dwelt upon. *F. W. Robertson.*

Who Knows How Near My End May Be? Two years ago every one read about the terrible tragedy of the burning of the steamer Slocum in New York harbor, with its freight of human souls. It had been chartered for the Sunday School of St. Mark's Lutheran Church, and hundreds who started for a pleasant excursion were burned to death or drowned. At the first meeting of the church after the terrible catastrophe, this solemn hymn was sung:

"Who knows how near my end may be?
Time speeds away, and death comes on.
How swiftly, ah, how suddenly,
May death be here, and life be gone!
My God, for Jesus' sake I pray
Thy peace may bless my dying day."

The True Significance of Death. Death's true significance lies in the fact that it brings men into final moral relations with God. They that have done good rise to honor and glory and immortality; and those that have done evil sink to shame and woe.

A wise forethought of death changes the emphasis of experience in this life. Just as soon as a man measures his history, or his experience, by infinite measures, how he puts to shame the common rules of society! When one frets over a small thing men are accustomed to say, "Well, it will be all the same a hundred years hence!" That is a sort of blind or homely way of coming at this same thing. . . . He who feels that

death opens the gate to another and higher state of existence, will look upon all parts of life, not with indifference, but with a different emphasis, and with a different meaning. *Henry Ward Beecher.*

II. Christ is Risen

Death's Conqueror. There was once a famous cape reputed to be the fatal barrier to the navigation of the ocean. Of all those whom the wind or the current had drawn into its waters, it was said that none had reappeared. A bold navigator determined to surmount the obstacle. He opened the route to the East Indies, acquired for his country the riches of the world, and changed the "Cape of Storms" into the "Cape of Good Hope." So Christ has proved Himself death's conqueror, and made the grave to be the gate of life for us. *The Christian Age.*

"The man He sent,
The Prince of Life, methinks I could have loved,
If I had looked once in His deep man's eyes.
But long ago He died, and long ago
Is gone."
He is not dead, He cannot go!
Men's faith at first was like a mastering stream,
Like Jordan, "the descender," leaping down
Pure from his snow; and warmed of tropic heat
Hiding himself in verdure;—then at last
In a Dead Sea absorbed—as faith of Doubt.
But yet the snow lies thick on Hermon's breast,
And daily at his source the stream is born!—
Go up! Go, mark the whiteness of the snow!
Thy faith is not thy Saviour, not thy God!
Though faith waste fruitless down a desert old,
The living God is new—and He is near! *Jean Ingelow.*

How Can One Be Certain That Jesus is With God? It is a question of the last importance. There are four lines of proof. The first is to lead reliable evidence that Jesus rose from Joseph's tomb—this is for the lawyer. The second is historical—the existence of the Christian Church—this is for the scholar. The third is mystical—the experience of Christians—the nature of Jesus' life—this is for every one. The last is most akin to the mind of Jesus, who was accustomed to insist on the self-evidencing power of His life. He is alive because He could not die. "I am the Resurrection and the Life." *John Watson.*

The Effect of Christ's Resurrection. "We are told that most savage natives live in a constant horror of death," says Canon Farrar. "Their life is one long flight from it; it poisons their happiness; it bursts like

a ghastly phantom upon their moments of peace. It is not death the agony that they shudder at, though there may be something terrible in that, but death the mystery. Can you wonder at this continuous dread? They know of no world beyond the grave, and what would life be without the trust in that? How purposeless and mean, how weary and hopeless; a journey leading no whither; a gate opening upon nothing; a ship sent forth only to founder in the unknown depths. . . .

Yes, Christ is risen. O how do those words change the whole aspect of human life! The sunlight that gleams forth after the world has been drenched, and terrified with the black thunder-drops, re-awakening the song of birds and re-illuminating the bloom of the folded flowers, does not more gloriously transfigure the landscape than these words transfigure the life of man. Nothing short of this could be our proof and pledge that we also shall arise."

III. Because He Lives We Shall Live Also

An Inborn Instinct Tells Us There is a Life Hereafter. The vast majority of mankind have always believed in a future existence. So the Egyptians believed—as the monuments and papyri show—forty centuries ago. Such has been the faith of all the great religions, Buddhism not excepted; also of savage tribes—of sages, like Socrates, Plato, Goethe, and Emerson. This belief has not come from argument or reasoning, but from an inborn instinct. If man has an instinct looking to a future life, and there is no future life provided for him, this is a solitary exception to a rule otherwise universal. *James Freeman Clarke.*

Christ's Certainty of our Immortality. In this matter of the life to come, when I have thought and thought and sometimes become dazed with thinking, I turn to Christ: I see how His teachings are alive with this feeling of immortality; how He could never think of death except as a falling asleep, or as going to the Father. There I finally rest. *Brooke Herford.*

The question of the how and the where of the life after death is not even touched in the teaching of Jesus. It matters little. The one thing He declares with unfaltering certainty is the reality of that life. The one thing that He presses home upon the minds of men with calm intensity is the danger of losing it through sin and unbelief. The one thing that He tenderly and urgently pleads with them to do, is to make sure of its immortal blessedness through faith and love and obedience to Him. *Henry van Dyke.*

Be Glad of Immortality. You have been down by this great lake of ours, and seen how the ship goes out and out, and sinks and sinks, and after a while the white sail is seen no more, and you say to yourself, "It is gone!" But no, it is not gone. That good ship has a captain, and there was a hand upon the helm. They did not notice that

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vanishing, artificial horizon; that was simply the place where your sight failed. So let us comfort one another with these words, and be glad of immortality, and of all those who have loved it, as all great souls have done. *Frances Willard.*

Jesus the Proof of Immortality. One evening you find among the reeds of your lake an unknown bird, whose broad breast and powerful pinions are not meant for this inland ocean. It is resting midway between two oceans, and by to-morrow will have gone. Does not that bird prove the ocean it left, does it not prove the ocean whither it has flown? "Jesus, knowing . . . that He was come from God and went to God," is the Revelation and Confirmation of Ageless Life. *John Watson.*

The wonder of the grub is that somewhere within it lurks the splendor and coloring and life of the golden butterfly; the wonder of the seed is that within it lies buried the bud and blossom; the wonder connected with me is that wrapped up in me, under many a covering, under many a fold, are the everlasting powers of a son of God. *David Gregg.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Christ's tomb was the grave of the old world and the cradle of the new. *Lamartine.*

Jesus' empty tomb proves Bethlehem's holy manger. *Boardman.*

Those who live in the Lord can never see each other for the last time. *German Motto.*

We go to the grave of a friend saying, "A man is dead," but angels throng about him saying, "A man is born." *H. W. Beecher.*

Earth's exodus is Heaven's genesis, and what we call the end, celestials call the beginning. *Henry Burton.*

What to thee are the memorial songs of resurrection if thine own spirit be dead? *George Mathewson.*

Who can tell but what this which we call life is really death, from which what we call death is an awakening? *John Fiske.*

I consider this world as a place which nature never designed for my permanent abode; and I look upon my departure from it, not as being driven out of my habitation, but as leaving my inn. *Cicero.*

There is no Death! What seems so is transition;
This life of mortal breath
Is but a suburb of the life elysian,
Whose portal we call Death. *Longfellow.*

Luther said, "I feel as if Jesus Christ died yesterday"; so fresh, so vivid, be our love and thankfulness: but may we add, "and as if He were coming to-day"; then our life would indeed be rich in remembrance and radiant in anticipation. *Frances Ridley Havergal.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up; but he spake of the temple of his body. John 2.19–21.

Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more. Rom. 6.9.

Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. 1 Cor. 15.20.

I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as those which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so they also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. Wherefore comfort one another with these words. 1 Thess. 4.13, 14, 18.

Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. 1 Cor. 13.12.

I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? John 11.25, 26.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

No man fits up the room at the hotel where he is to stay a week or a month as he does the home where he expects to spend his life. When one is waiting in the vestibule of a public hall where he is to hear some great orator, he does not give much thought to the inconveniences of his situation. . . . He says to himself, if he gives any thought at all to the matter, "The time is short; it will soon be over; it is not worth troubling myself about."

Do we recognize the larger application of the same principle? Suppose we simply enlarge the spaces a little, and set this life of sixty, seventy, or four-score years over against the eternal life of the future. The two spaces are related to each other as the vestibule to the hall, the transit on the car to the day's business. Can we bring ourselves really to regard this life as the ante-chamber, the time of transit, the room in the inn where we stay until our house is prepared? Can we bring ourselves to regard our real life as commencing only when this life shall be over; to look for our real, permanent interests in the life beyond, and to treat the affairs of this life accordingly? *Marvin R. Vincent.*

THE LESSON SUMMARY

It is with great relief that we turn to-day from the sorrow and death on the cross and the darkness and gloom of the tomb to the brightness and glory of the resurrection morning.

Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to the sepulcher as day began to dawn, bringing spices which they had prepared. "Who shall roll us

away the stone from the door of the tomb?" had been their anxious question on the way, but an angel of the Lord had descended from Heaven and rolled away the stone. Terror at the radiant appearance of the angel, and the accompanying earthquake, overcame the guard, they "became as dead men." As soon as they could, they hastened to the city, to the chief-priests under whose direction they were on guard, and told them all. Such news as theirs must not be repeated, the priests avow; else will the risen Galilean become a greater power against them and their authority than ever was the living Rabbi. They bought the silence of the soldiers with money, and spread abroad the report that the disciples came by night and stole the body of Jesus while the guard slept on duty.

The Three Marys at the Sepulcher
(From a painting by Peschel)

Meanwhile to the amazed women the angel said: "Ye seek Jesus. He is not here; for he is risen as he said. Come and see the place where the Lord lay. Go quickly and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead." Overwhelmed with great joy and with great fear as well at the wonderful revelation, the women ran to tell the disciples. On their way Jesus met them and said, "All hail." In their joy and eagerness they fell down and clasped the feet of Jesus as if to keep Him evermore with them, but Jesus bade them go and tell the disciples to go into Galilee, and promised to meet them there.

"If a man die, shall he live again?" asked Job three thousand years ago. Christ answered the question that Easter morning. Death is swallowed up in victory. Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Persuading men by means of money.
2. The ten recorded appearances of Christ after His resurrection.
3. "I have been powerful; I have turned the currents, and made the world different." That is a great comfort for many a strong man to think of as he dies. "I have been useful, I have made the world better," is a much nobler satisfaction. "I have been honored, I have made men regard and love me," is a pleasant thought which has made death harder and easier at once to many men; others have looked back into rich fields of knowledge through which their path has lain, and said rejoicingly and hopefully, "I have learned much;" while others have had no better comfort

to lay to their hearts than merely, "I have made a great deal of money;" and not a few, weary of life, have laid down their heads to die with no profounder thought than just that it was over, that at last they had got through.—*Phillips Brooks.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Look up the references to the Old Testament mentioned by Christ in verses 46, 47. (Isaiah 53; Jer. 23.5, 6.) 2. Read Christ's words of comfort in John 14.1-11. 3. Write an account of the appearances of Christ after His resurrection, giving them in the following order:—a. To Mary, John 20.14-18; Mark 16.9-11, and to the women, Matt. 28.9, 10. b. To the disciples on the way to Emmaus, Mark 16.12, 13; Luke 24.13-32. c. To Peter, Luke 24.34; 1 Cor. 15.5. d. To the ten, Mark 16.14; Luke 24.36-43; John 20.19-23. e. To Thomas with the other disciples, John 20.26-29. f. To the seven disciples by the Sea of Galilee, John 21.1-24. g. To the eleven on a mountain in Galilee, Matt. 28.16-20. h. To the five hundred, 1 Cor. 15.6. i. To James, 1 Cor. 15.7. j. Final appearance, Luke 24.44-53; Mark 16.19, 20; Acts 1.6-11. 4. Read the accounts of the appearance of Christ after the ascension to Paul, in Acts 9.4-6; 18.9, 10; 22.6-10; 26.12-18. 5. Read the account of the ascension, the waiting for the Comforter, and the day of Pentecost, in Acts 1 and 2. 6. Look up these New Testament references to Christ's exaltation: Acts 7.55, 56; Rom. 2.34; Col. 3.1; Phil. 2.8, 9; Heb. 1.13; 8.1; Eph. 1.20-23; 4.9, 10; Rev. 3.21; 22.1.

BETWEEN LESSON XI AND LESSON XII

As two of the disciples were going to the village of Emmaus on the day of the resurrection, and were talking about the things that had happened, Jesus went with them, "but their eyes were holden, that they should not know him." Jesus asked them what they were talking about so sadly, and they told Him about the crucifixion and the saying of the women who had been at the tomb. Then said Jesus unto them: "O slow of heart to believe what all the prophets have spoken!" and He interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. They urged Him to abide with them at Emmaus, and their eyes were opened so that they knew Him as He took bread and blessed it, but He vanished out of their sight. At once they arose and went to Jerusalem, and to the disciples there assembled who were saying, "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon," they told their story. (Mark 16.12, 13; Luke 24.13-35.)

JESUS ASCENDS INTO HEAVEN

Luke 24.36-53. (Read Matt. 28.16-20; Mark 16.14-20.) Commit vv. 46-48.

Golden Text

While He blessed them he was parted from them and was received up into heaven. Luke 24.51.

Time: Sunday evening, April 9, to Thursday, May 18, A. D. 30.
Place: Jerusalem. Mount of Olives. Geography Lesson, paragraph 87.

LESSON TEXT. LUKE 24.36-53

36 And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace *be* unto you.
37 But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit.
38 And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?
39 Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.
40 And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them *his* hands and *his* feet.
41 And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat?
42 And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb.
43 And he took *it*, and did eat before them.
44 And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me.
45 Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,
46 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:
47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.
48 And ye are witnesses of these things.
49 And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.
50 And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them.
51 And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven:
52 And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy:
53 And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

36. *They.* The ten disciples and their friends, to whom the two Emmaus disciples had been telling their wonderful story. Thomas was not with them. John adds, *when the door was shut.* (20.26.)

41. *Have ye here any meat?* "Either a ghost or an ordinary body needing food," is false. There is a third possibility; a glorified body, capable of receiving food. Is there any deceit in taking food, which one does not want, in order to place others who are needing it, at their ease? *Plummer. Meat,* R. V., *any thing to eat.*

44-49. These verses are a brief summary of Christ's teaching during the forty days between the resurrection and the ascension. "We incline to the view that verse 44 was spoken on the evening of the resurrection day, that the 45th sums up the instruction of the interval, His "speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God" (Acts 1.3), and that verse 46 introduces the account of the discourse on ascension day, more fully recorded by Luke in Acts 1.4–8. *Riddle. While I was yet with you.* Before His death. *In the law . . . psalms.* The Jews divided the Old Testament into Law, Prophets, and *Hagiographa. Riddle.*

46. *Thus it behooved.* R. V., *Thus it is written that the Christ should suffer.*

49. *The promise of my Father.* The Holy Spirit. (See Acts 1.4, 5.) *Until,* Luke says, *not many days hence.* (Acts 1.5.) *Ye be endued,* R. V., *ye be clothed.* A common figurative expression, clothed as with a garment, an abiding influence. For the fulfilment of this promise, see Acts 2.

50. Compare Acts 1.1-11; Eph. 4.10. *As far as to Bethany,* R. V., *over against Bethany.* "The scene was on the eastern slope of Olivet, facing Bethany."

52. *With great joy.* The joy of men convinced that the Lord was risen and gone up to glory, and that great events were impending in connection with the promise of the Spirit. *Bruce.*

53. *Praising and blessing God.* This waiting was itself a blessing; their composure a proof that they were undisturbed, a proof that the Jewish Council dared not bring a charge that they had stolen the body of Jesus; their prayerfulness was a proof of their faith; their blessing God a sign that they had not lost Him, but should see Him again. *Riddle.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

36. *Jesus stood in the midst of them.* No less than ten (or eleven) distinct appearances are recorded, and these not only to individuals, but to companies and crowds. First to the women (to Mary and then to the other women). Then to Peter. Then to two men walking to Em-

maus. Then to ten apostles, and subsequently to eleven. Yet later to seven men approaching the sea-shore. Yet again to the whole number of the apostles, and afterwards to five hundred brethren at once. Then to James, and finally to the little group gathered round Him when He ascended. *G. Campbell Morgan.*

39. *Behold my hands and feet.* The disciples were very honest, but very unapt to take in new ideas. They were like horses with blinders on, and could see only in one direction—that, namely, of their prejudices. It required the surgery of events to insert a new truth into their minds. Nothing would change the current of their thoughts but a damwork of undeniable fact. They could be convinced that Christ must die only by His dying, that He must rise, only by His rising, that His kingdom was not to be of this world, only by the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost and the vocation of the Gentiles. Let us be thankful for the honest stupidity of these men. It gives great value to their testimony. *A. B. Bruce.*

49. *Tarry ye.* How do they wait? Do they sit still and silent, all the time expecting a descent of the Power? No. They prayed, they even transacted business; for in those days Peter stood up and proposed the election of a new apostle in the room of Judas, gone to his own place. Nor was their meeting a dull one, as those may imagine who have never passed through any great spiritual crisis, and to whom waiting on God is a symbol for listless indolence. The hundred and twenty believers did not, we may be sure, suffer from ennui. Prayers and supplications alone filled up many blessed hours. "These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication." *Bruce, Training of the Twelve.*

49. *Power from on high.*

> He to His own a Comforter will send,
> The promise of the Father, who shall dwell
> His Spirit within them, and the law of faith
> Working through love, upon their hearts shall write,
> To guide them in all truth. *Milton.*

It does not surprise one that Jesus should suddenly disappear any more than that a bubble should rise to the surface of water, or that He ascended from the earth any more than that a bird should open its wings and fly. It was not strange that Jesus should pass into the unseen; it was strange that He should appear in the seen. *John Watson.*

53. *They returned to Jerusalem with great joy.*

> From the lap of corruption, lo, Christ hath ascended.
> Rejoice, for the fetters that bound you are rended!
> Praise Him unceasingly; love one another:
> Break bread together, like Sister and Brother:
> Preach the Good Tidings to all who will hear you:
> So shall the Master be evermore near you! *Goethe.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

36. *Peace be unto you.* Among the Jews, the common phrases of salutation at meeting friends, and those that were used in parting from them, were of a religious character, expressing prayers for the blessing of God on those to whom they were spoken. "Be thou blessed of Jehovah;" "The blessings of Jehovah be upon thee;" "God be with thee." Such were the usual forms in the most ancient times. A still more universal expression was, "Peace be with you;" and this is the general salutation in Eastern countries in this day. When uttered by our Saviour's lips, the words had real and rich signification, widely different from their empty value, as they were commonly used in the ceremonies of a frivolous world. To this difference He Himself directed the attention of His disciples when He was about to be taken from them: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you." *Nevin, Biblical Antiquities.*

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. There is a beautiful poem of Tennyson's called *In Memoriam.* In this poem he pictures Lazarus raised from the dead, and imagines that he is asked, "Where wert thou, brother, those four days?" What a natural question this would be! It is a question that you and I would like to ask him. But the poet tells us "There lives no record of reply." This is one of the things which God has kept from us. We would like to know where Jesus had been during those days in the tomb, where He was during all those forty days after His resurrection — for we have a record of only a few appearances to His disciples — but we have no answer to all these natural questions. In Acts 7 Jesus said to His disciples, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power."

What did we learn last week about Christ's appearance to a few faithful women?

For Older Pupils. In the baptistry of St. Mark's, Venice, there are three domes covered with the most exquisite mosaics. In the first you behold Christ surrounded by the patriarchs and prophets of the Old Testament, each unfolding a scroll containing a portion of the words of His prophecy. The dominant thought is Christ revealed in the Holy Scriptures. When, however, you reach the second dome, you have passed into the New Testament. Christ is enthroned there, not as Messiah, but as the Risen Lord, surrounded no longer by prophets, but by His own disciples. He wears gold and red, the emblems of royalty; His right hand is raised in blessing; His left holds the resurrection banner and scroll. The marks of the nails are visible in His hands and feet. Below are the twelve Apostles, each in the country which was the sphere of his

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mission. Their converts are around them, and the words of the great missionary commandment are on the scroll. Thus are you naturally led from Christ risen to Christ reigning, which forms the subject of the easternmost mosaic, where, over the altar itself, He sits enthroned in the midst of hierarchies of angels. *Thomas A. Guerney.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. The Ascended Christ

What Was the Ascension? One might ask, whither did our Lord go when He took His departure from this earthly scene? It would be a very childish notion to say that He went up and up, far above the most distant star. We all know, to-day, that there is neither up nor down in this visible universe. If we were transported to the moon, we would see the earth shining over our heads. We sometimes speak of Heaven as "up;" somewhere beyond the stars, as though if we went up far enough, we should come to it. But this is merely a conventional form of speech. It has the same significance as to say the sun rises. The sun, in reality, never rises. The Heaven is neither up somewhere nor down somewhere. In the ascension of Christ we are told that He was taken up; but this is only an accommodation of language. It is not an accurate form of expression, no more than to say that the sun rises. What was the ascension in reality? It was Christ passing from the seen world to the unseen world. *George H. Ide.*

The Incarnation and the Ascension. We picture Christ coming from far, down through the ranks of angels, down from the battlements of Heaven; far, far beyond the sun we picture Him leaving the eternal seat and "coming down" to save the world. Then we picture Christ's departure. Back by the way He came, beyond the sun again, once more through the shining hosts, until He takes His everlasting seat at the throne of God. There is truth in such pictures. But have we not caught more of the spirit of the Incarnation if we think of it, not as the bringing to us of a God who had been far away, but as the showing to us of a God who had been hidden? It is as if the cloud parted and the tired and thirsty traveler saw by his side a brook of clear, sweet water, running along by the road he traveled. Then the cloud closed again, but the traveler who had once seen the brook could never be faint with thirst again. He must always know where to find it and drink of it. Christ was not a God coming out of absence. He was the ever-present God, revealing how near He always was. *Phillips Brooks.*

Christ Has Become a Universal Christ. He is no longer a local Christ, confined to Jerusalem, but He becomes a universal Christ, so that He could say to His disciples, who mourned His departure, thinking, when gone, He could be no more with them, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." *George H. Ide.*

Christ is Our Intercessor. Once in the year, washed and crowned and clothed in white linen, bearing in his hand the incense of kindling perfumes, sprinkling the blood of the sacrifice upon the consecrated gold, passed the Jewish high-priest through the embroidered curtain into the Holiest Place, and then, reclad in the splendid vestures of priesthood, in blue and purple and crimson, woven with pomegranates and fringed with bells, he came forth to bless the people, while on his breast shone the Urim and Thummim ardent with oracular gems. But this ceremonial of gorgeous significance was but the antitype of a truer propitiation. For us, in the shining vesture of a stainless life, with the nobler sacrifice of His own life, and the more fragrant incense of His own prayers, has passed on this day through the starry blue veil of Heaven our great High-Priest for ever to the throne of His never-ending rule. And therefore when we are summoned to the bar of God's Judgment-seat, we may hope; for we have an Intercessor. Humble yet unabashed may we stand where the very seraphs must veil their faces with their wings, for He is by our side.

Oh, with the thought of such an Intercessor is not the lesson of the ascension, for those who love, for those who try to love their Lord, is it not a lesson of infinite peace and hope? *F. W. Farrar, Sermons.*

The Influence of the Thought of the Present Christ. I have been in Alpine villages, where, at the end of every squalid alley, there towered up a great, pure, silent, white peak. That is what our lives may be; however noisome, crowded, petty, the little lanes in which we live, the Alps is at the end of them if we only choose to lift our eyes and look.

It is probable that not only "into the sessions of sweet, silent thought," but into the rush and bustle of the workshop or the exchange, there may come, "like some sweet beguiling melody, so sweet we know not we are listening to it," the thought that changes pettiness into greatness, that makes all things go smoothly and easily, that is a test and a charm to discover and to destroy temptation, the thought of a present Christ, the Lover of my soul, and the Helper of my life. *G. Campbell Morgan.*

II. Joy and Praise

Sadness Changed to Joy. In the region near the North Cape, at the close of the long winter night, the people assemble to catch the first gleam of the returning sun. As soon as it is seen, from one group to another over the country goes the joyous exclamation, "Behold the Sun! Behold the Sun!"

When the Saviour hung on Calvary and rested in the tomb, then was the long night of darkness and gloom. How could there be gladness and rejoicing? But when He, the Ever-Living One, returned, somber sadness gave way to joyous praise. "Behold the Sun of Righteousness with healing in His wings!"

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The Chief End of Man. The Westminster Confession says that the chief end of man's life is "to glorify God." The old divines who drew up that confession had gained a clear glimpse into the relation of things. Above all personal interest, above all selfish advantage, stands the glory of God. In the soldier's thought, above any consideration of personal comfort or safety, or even of life, stands the thought of the honor of the flag and the country's weal. And so in Christ's mind, far above the thought of self must stand the thought of God. First things first. Before the prayer for daily bread, for forgiveness, for deliverance, comes the prayer that God may have the glory due His name. *J. D. Jones.*

Who Can Sing God's Praises? I have seen a caged lark in a poor house. A caged bird rarely sings; it so regrets the green fields, its liberty, and the glorious sunshine. But this lark sang as if its very heart would burst. Its song was its salvation. Had it been sullenly dumb, it would likely have pined away and died. The spirit of praise keeps the soul healthy and glad even when it is caged in a miserable and narrow lot. . . . Michelet says that all singing birds live in the sun, fill themselves with it and are inspired by it. Their world is the world of light. Only those hearts can sing God's praise that keep themselves in the light and love of God. *James Wells.*

The Joy of the Spirit. Do you remember how, in almost His last hour, just as He was facing the cross, Christ turned to His disciples and said, "My joy I give to you?" That is joy of the spirit; the joy of the soldier who bares his bosom to the bullet; the joy of the nurse who gives herself with patient endurance to the service of the hospital; the joy of the physician who carries on his shoulders the burdens of a hundred families bowed by sickness; the joy of suffering for others. And yet is this the joy that we are most covetous of, most eager to get? that you are most covetous of, that you are most eager to get? *Lyman Abbott.*

III. Eternity

Life a Training for Eternity. The Christian is like the pearl-diver, who is out of the sunshine for a little, spending his short day amid rocks and weeds and dangers at the bottom of the ocean. Does he desire to spend his life there? No, but his Master does. Is his life there? No, his life is up above. A communication is open to the surface, and the fresh, pure life comes down to him from God. Is he not wasting time there? He is gathering pearls for his Master's crown. Will he always stay there? When the last pearl is gathered, the "Come up higher" will beckon him away, and the weights which kept him down will become an exceeding weight of glory, and he will go, he and those he brings with him, to his Father.

He feels, to change the metaphor, like a man in training for a race. It is months off still, but it is nearer him than to-morrow, nearer than any-

thing else. Great things are always near things. So he lives in his future. Ask him why this deliberate abstinence from luxury in eating and drinking. "He is keeping his life," he says. Why this self-denial, this separation from worldliness, this change to a quiet life from revelries far into the night? "He is keeping his life." He can not have both the future and the present; and he knows that every regulated hour, and every temptation scorned and set aside, is adding a nobler tissue to his frame and keeping his life for the prize that is to come.

Trial to the Christian is training for eternity, and he is perfectly contented; for he knows that "he who loveth his life in this world shall lose it; but he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal." He is keeping his life till he gets to the Father. *Henry Drummond.*

To live for to-day is in the noblest sense to live for eternity. To be my very best this very hour, to do the very best for those about me, and to spend this moment in a spirit of consecration to God's glory, this is the duty that confronts me. *D. J. Burrell.*

What the Future Life Will Be. Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, it hath not entered into the imagination of the heart of man to conceive! Will you undertake to tell a little child studying the primer what is the glory of scholarship? Will you undertake to tell an Indian paddling his canoe what is the significance of our ocean steamer? Will you undertake to tell the bulb in the ground what is the beauty of the tulip when it has blossomed? Better try that than try to tell the men that are grubs in the chrysalis what the glorious flight in the sunshine will be. If this world is the chrysalis, what shall the sunshine and the flight become? I only know this: it will be so glorious in all outward beauty that the things of this life will seem insignificant in comparison. *Lyman Abbott.*

Service Will Be Joy. Your little boy came home from school on Friday, and he was very tired with lessons and running, and when bedtime came, how fast asleep he fell; and you stooped down and looked at him and kissed him, and perhaps a tear fell on his cheek, you know not why. And you said, "Poor laddie, he is utterly worn out, he needed rest." And then dawns Saturday, and the voices of a new day are calling him, and his muscles are strong again, and his brain is quick, and he is up and out and romping with the merriest. Last night it was rest he wanted, but this morning it is play.

So for all there comes the Friday night. Our week of school is done. God's discipline is over. We lay aside our pencils and our books, and we are wearied with the stress of it, and we are tired with the pain of it, and we cry out, "O God, to be at rest!" And so we fall asleep, and it may be that on us, as on our children, some tears fall. Then dawns the Saturday, the everlasting Sabbath, and we awake, and Jesus Christ is there. And every faculty is full of being, and every part is wondrously expanded; and we are quivering, inspired with life, and we

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do not want to rest; we want to serve, and the service of eternity is play! For here we must be driven to service, but yonder to serve will be our very joy. And here we are so sinful, service is irksome work; but yonder, glorified, it will be like play. *G. R. Morrison.*

The Joy That Comes With the Right Thought of Eternal Life. The power to look upon the things not seen, but which are eternal, is the secret of the highest happiness which life can have. By it the thought of another kind of existence becomes not a dark and chilling shadow, but a light that gleams in the sorrows and disappointments of life.

It is a hope that sings in unison with every pure delight of youth and home and friendship. It is an unfailing spring of enthusiasm for all the toil and trial of service for the uplift of others; and when time and strength are failing, it is a light that shines brighter and brighter as we draw near the Open Door. *The Youth's Companion.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Greet the Unseen with a cheer. *Browning.*

A Christian's duty is to admit, submit, commit, and transmit. *Wilberforce.*

Great hearts alone understand how much glory there is in being good. *Jules Michelet.*

The life of every human being in the proportion that it is a Christian life is a perpetual Excelsior. *Boardman.*

If a man is unhappy, this must be his own fault; for God made all men to be happy. *Epictetus.*

Go, breathe it in the ear
Of all who doubt and fear,
And say to them, "Be of good cheer!" *Longfellow.*

I wonder many times that ever a child of God should have a sad heart, considering what God is preparing for him. *Rutherford.*

The only power that ever stooped to the masses was the power accustomed to the heights; the man that descended was the man that ascended. *George Matheson.*

The ascension was the inevitable culmination of the resurrection; Christ's risen body being the spiritual, celestial body, Heaven's gravitation was of course stronger than earth's. *George Dana Boardman.*

The ascension of Elijah may be compared to the flight of a bird, which none can follow; the ascension of Christ is, as it were, a bridge between earth and Heaven, laid down for all who are drawn to Him by His earthly existence. *Baumgarten.*

Any view of the future may be fairly tried by this criterion — does it strengthen, gladden, inspire us in the present? *John Watson.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things. Eph. 4.10.

Jesus Christ who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him. 1 Pet. 3.22.

Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth into everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you. John 6.27.

To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life. Rom. 2.7.

Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Matt. 28.20.

In my Father's house are many mansions: I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am, there ye may be also. John 14.2, 3.

It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. John 16.7.

Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. 1 Cor. 2.9.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Christ your King, your Saviour, your High-Priest, Who wears your nature, Who knows your temptations, Who mourns your sins, Who reads your hearts, is living still, living in Heaven, watching you with love and hope, drawing you to Himself; searching even at this moment, with love or grief, the most secret thoughts of your very hearts. Do you think that you can conceal them, if they are thoughts of sin? Oh, no! the cloud that received Him out of your sight is no cloud to Him; oh pray that it may be no cloud to us, no cloud to you. Believe me, then will life itself be different to you, and lit with the Light of Heaven. *F. W. Farrar.*

THE LESSON SUMMARY

During forty days Jesus appeared at intervals to His friends. Our last lesson told about His appearance to the women, and especially to Mary. Then He talked with the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, and was seen by Peter. The first part of our lesson to-day tells of His sudden appearance in the midst of the disciples when they were gathered together on the first day of the week, the door being shut for fear of the Jews. Suddenly Christ is with them saying, "Peace be unto you." They are terrified and affrighted, and again Christ speaks, "Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?" To convince them that He

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is the crucified, risen Saviour, He shows them the print of the nails in His hands and His feet, bids them touch Him to see that He has flesh and bones, and then, further to reassure them, asks them for food.

Thomas was not with the disciples during this appearance of Christ to them, but eight days afterward when all were together, Christ came again into their midst suddenly and said, "Peace be unto you." To Thomas He said, "Reach hither thy finger and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing." "My Lord and my God," exclaimed Thomas. "Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed," said Christ, "blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

A while later Jesus stood on the shore of Galilee, and called to the

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disciples who had been fishing all night without success, ordering them to cast the net on the right side of the boat. They did this, and caught a multitude of fish. "It is the Lord," said Peter. When they came to land they found a fire of coals and fish laid thereon, and bread. "Come and break your fast," said the Lord. Then to Peter three times He said, "Lovest thou me?" and to his repeated answers, "Yea, Lord," He returned, "Feed my sheep." "Lord, and what shall this man do?" asked Peter, indicating John. "What is that to thee? Follow thou me."

Later to the eleven disciples on the mountain in Galilee Christ appeared and commissioned them to make disciples of all nations. "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world," is His special word of comfort to them.

Paul adds that Christ appeared to five hundred and also to James. (1 Cor. 15.6, 7.)

At His last appearance to the disciples, Christ bade them tarry in Jerusalem till endued with power from on high. Then going forth with them to the brow of the Mount of Olives, facing Bethany, "He lifted up his hands and blessed them, and while he blessed them he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven."

How different now the hope and joy of those chosen disciples from their despair and shame at the crucifixion! They return to Jerusalem with great joy, and are continually in the temple praising and blessing God.

We have followed the earthly life of our Saviour from His lowly birth at Bethlehem to His glorious ascension on the Mount of Olives; we journeyed with Him throughout His ministry, seeing His marvelous miracles, and listening to His wondrous teaching; and we found that though He died a shameful death, the death on the cross, yet He arose and ascended into Heaven, whence He ever liveth to make intercession for us.

"Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in His name."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The Epistle to the Ephesians, "The Epistle of the Ascension."

2. Above everything else I am a Christian Imperialist. I want to see the banner of the cross floating over every land. I want to see every nation acknowledging one and the same King — even Jesus. *J. D. Jones.*

3. Bible References to Heaven: the translation of Enoch; the ascension of Elijah; the 16th, 23d, and 73d Psalms; the vision of Daniel; triumphant cry of Hosea over death; Resurrection, Ascension, and coming again of Christ; the 15th chapter of First Corinthians; vision of the Apocalypse.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. What do these Bible names mean to you: Abraham (faith), Moses (meekness), Solomon (wisdom), Nehemiah (heroism), Jeremiah (tenderness), Daniel (fidelity), Samuel (integrity), John the Baptist (humility, moral courage), Judas (treachery), Mary (love), Pilate (weakness), Peter (impetuosity), Thomas (doubt), Paul (courage). 2. From the Subject-Index of your Bible, under *Christ, Titles of,* select four that you especially like and quote a verse in which each occurs. 3. What does Isaiah prophesy about the "spirit of counsel" of Christ? (Isa. 11.2.) 4. Beginning with Saturday, the 31st of March, write all the events that occurred on each day of Passion Week.

REVIEW

April 4 to May 18, A. D. 30.

Golden Text for the Quarter

His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Isa. 9.6.

What Names Signify. A name is a call word, by which we separate objects, and give to each its identity. The names of familiar objects, however, are not simply arbitrary signs used for separation and designation. In an important way they become symbols of quality and attribute. This is seen in the picture that rises to the mind upon the use of a name. The word *eagle, horse, lion,* being spoken, a picture springs up to the eye of the imagination.

Names come to signify not only persons but historic qualities. Socrates has almost no personality — at any rate to those who have never seen his face; but he signifies philosophic common sense. Plato means pure thought and imagination; Demosthenes, eloquence; Cato, strong integrity; Nero, cruelty; Napoleon, military genius; Washington, patriotism; Howard, philanthropy; Garibaldi, the friend of the common people. . . .

There are judges' names that signify perfect justice. There are names of princes and kings that signify authority, splendor, and power. There are names of generals that signify great skill and capacity. But has the world stored up in any of these names such associations as belong to the name of Jesus Christ? Is there anywhere, out of Christ, such a conception of justice, such imperialness, such sovereignty as there is in Him? *Henry Ward Beecher.*

The Names of Divinity Reveal the Divine Attributes. You remember that when Jacob wrestled with the angel till break of day by the side of the brook Jabbok, his last request to his antagonist was this, "Tell me, I pray thee, thy name." What was it Jacob really wanted to know? He wanted to know the nature, the character of the mighty Wrestler. He wanted to know whether it was love or wrath that had constrained him to pass through terrible agony.

Every name applied in the Bible to God means something; every name tells us something about Him; every name is a light upon His nature. When you hear a man's name it tells you nothing about his character.

You are not a whit nearer knowing what a man is really like for hearing that his name is John, or David, or Thomas, or Joseph. The names are mere labels. But it is different in the case of God. Every name applied to Him is significant. It expresses some aspect of His character. Men caught fresh glimpses into the depths of the divine nature, and their new knowledge was expressed by a new name. *J. D. Jones.*

His Name Shall Be Called Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. The name is best understood as fourfold, the first two epithets being taken together, that is, Wonderful Counselor, just as the remaining words are grouped in pairs. All the four clauses are one name, not four names, by which is indicated the many-sided completeness of the King's character and activity.

He is for us the Wonderful Counselor, because He is the "wisdom of God." He is the Mighty God, because in Him "dwells all the fullness of the Godhead," and He is the power of God. He is the Everlasting Father, because His changeless love compasses His people round as with paternal and perpetual care. He is the Prince of Peace, because, having conquered in His tremendous battle, He reigns for ever to bring peace on earth and between earth and Heaven. *Alexander Maclaren, in Sunday School Times.*

His Name Shall Be Called Wonderful. When Jesus began to be a force in human life, there were four existent types on which men formed themselves and which are still in evidence. One is the moral, and has the Jew for its supreme illustration, with his faith in the eternal, and his devotion to the law of righteousness. The next is the intellectual, and was seen to perfection in the Greek. The third is the political, and stood enthroned at Rome. And the last is the commercial, and had its forerunner in the Phenician. Any other man born at the beginning of the first century could be dropped into his class, but Jesus defied classification. As He moved among the synagogues of Galilee, He was an endless perplexity. One could never anticipate Him. One was in despair to explain Him. "Whence is He?" the people whispered with a vague sense of the problem, for He marked the introduction of a new form of life. He was not referable to type: He was the beginning of a time. *John Watson, in The Mind of the Master.*

Human nature may be said to vibrate between the desire to understand and the need to wonder. The wonderfulness of Christ is not marvelous. It is not something to astonish. It has a meaning and a purpose prior to that and above it. There is no part of Christ's wonderfulness which does not serve a great end and occupy a distinct and necessary place. No man can say, "Here is something that exists merely or chiefly to excite wonder." Is not this entire absence of the merely marvelous from the wonderfulness of Christ one of the greatest wonders? If you take away the wonder of His twofold nature, you take away the wonder of His mediation and priesthood and the glory of His sacrifice. *Joseph Leckie.*

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The Mighty God. The Lord of Creation and the Lord of Redemption is one Lord; the "God said" which peopled primeval space with nebulous masses is also the "God said" which gemmed the night sky with the Star of Bethlehem; the hand which reared the gigantic forests of the carboniferous era is also the hand which was nailed to the Judean tree; the God who in the beginning had said, "Let light be," is also the God who afterwards said, "I am the light of men." *George Dana Boardman.*

The Everlasting Father. In the Old Testament Father was *a* name of God; in the New Testament Father is *the* name of God. Divine Fatherhood penetrates the New Testament through and through. Why does the Master dwell upon the Fatherhood of God, declare it, reiterate it, argue it, prove it, illustrate it, dramatize it? For two reasons. First, it is the greatest and most wonderful fact pertaining to God; and, second, it is the hardest fact for us to realize and appreciate and enjoy. But to as many as receive Jesus, "to them gives he power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." *David Gregg.*

Prince of Peace. The night Jesus was born a multitude of the heavenly host praised God, saying: "Glory to God in the highest! and on earth peace, good will toward men!", And the last night He was on earth as the Man of Sorrows, He left to His disconsolate disciples His own priceless legacy, saying: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you." No wonder, then, that the Prince of Peace in His risen, heavenly estate should say to His church, "Peace be unto you!" Peace has been, and still is, and ever will be, world without end, the watchword of the Mediator's kingdom, the very shibboleth of the Peacemaker's church: Peace with God, Peace with man, Peace with self. No wonder the Apostolic Epistles begin and end with Christianity's countersign: "Grace and peace be unto you from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ." *George Dana Boardman.*

An Admonition. There is a slab in the cathedral of Lübeck, Germany, which bears this inscription:

"Thus speaketh Christ, our Lord, to us:

"Ye call me Master, and obey me not;
Ye call me Light, and see me not;
Ye call me Way, and walk me not;
Ye call me Life, and desire me not;
Ye call me Wise, and follow me not;
Ye call me Fair, and love me not;
Ye call me Rich, and ask me not;
Ye call me Eternal, and seek me not;
Ye call me Gracious, and trust me not;
Ye call me Noble, and serve me not;
Ye call me Mighty, and honor me not;
Ye call me Just, and fear me not;
If I condemn you, blame me not."

REVIEW OUTLINES

Title	Persons	Outline
1. The Two Great Commandments.	Jesus, A Scribe, People, Widow, Disciples.	What is the great commandment? Well answered. Warning against hypocrisy. Widow's mites.
2. The Ten Virgins.	Jesus, Disciples.	Waiting. Wise virgins. Weak virgins. Woe. Watch.
3. The Parable of the Talents.	Jesus, Disciples.	Servants trusted. Service faithful. Secures reward. Slothful servant. Severely punished.
4. Jesus Anointed in Bethany.	Jesus, Mary, Disciples, Simon.	Precious ointment. Protest of disciples. Prodigality of love. Perpetual praise. Perfidious Judas.
5. The Lord's Supper.	Jesus, Householder, Disciples.	Passover kept. Perfidy announced. Partaking of the Lord's Supper.
6. Jesus in Gethsemane.	Jesus, Disciples, Judas, Multitude.	Garden of Gethsemane. Great agony. God's will be done. Greeting of Judas. Guards seize Jesus.
7. Jesus Before Caiaphas.	Jesus, Guard, Sanhedrim, Peter, False Witnesses.	Sanhedrim assembled. Sad fall of Peter. Silence of Jesus. Saviour's claims. Sentence of death. Smiting and scoffing.

Fourth Quarter Lesson XIII December 30	Title	Persons	Outline
	8. The World's Temperance Sunday.	Isaiah, Israelites.	Persistent drinking. Presumptuous sin. Punishment sure. Perverse judgment. Perverted justice.
	9. Jesus Before Pilate.	Jesus, Pilate, Multitude, Sanhedrim, Barabbas.	Verdict of Pilate. Villainous choice. Vacillation of Pilate. Vehemence of multitude. Vanquished by the mob.
	10. Jesus on the Cross.	Jesus, Two Malefactors, Multitude, Rulers, Soldiers.	Crucifixion. Cruel mockery. Confession. Comforting promise. Conquering Christ.
	11. Jesus Risen from the Dead.	Women, Angel, Jesus, Guard, Chief Priests.	Resurrection of Jesus. Reassurance of angel. Reverent worship of women. Report of guard.
	12. Jesus Ascends into Heaven.	Jesus, Disciples.	Assembled disciples. Assurance given. Ascended Christ.

A BRIEF REVIEW OF THE LESSONS

Lesson 1. After the questions about tribute and the resurrection, a scribe came to Jesus with a third question, "Which is the first commandment of all?" "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, and thy neighbor as thyself," is Jesus' answer. "Thou hast said the truth," returned the scribe, "there is one God, and to love him and to love one's neighbor is more than burnt-offerings and sacrifices." "Thou art not far from the kingdom," Jesus responds, and no one dares ask Him any further question. Jesus adds a warning against hypocrisy. "Beware," He says, "of the scribes who love long clothing, salutations in market places, chief seats in synagogues, uppermost rooms at feasts, and who devour widows' houses and for a pretence make long prayers." Passing on into the Court of the Women, Jesus watches the people as they put their money into the treasury. He declares that no one has put in so much as a poor widow, who gave only two mites, for "they did cast in of their abundance, but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living."

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Lesson 2. The kingdom of Heaven, says Jesus, may be likened to Ten Virgins who go with their lamps to meet the bridegroom. The bridegroom tarries and all sleep, till they are suddenly aroused at midnight by the cry, "Behold the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him." Five wise virgins have brought with them an extra supply of oil; five foolish virgins have no supply of oil, and their lamps are going out. "Give us of your oil," they cry to the wise virgins, but the latter tell them there is not enough for all, and they must go and buy it. While the foolish virgins are seeking oil, the procession forms and the wise virgins go with it to the marriage. The door is shut, and when the foolish virgins arrive and ask admittance, the bridegroom answers, "Verily, I know you not." The bridegroom is Christ Himself; the wise virgins with their supply of oil are those constant Christians who are always ready for Christ's coming; the foolish virgins are the superficial characters whose Christianity will not bear testing. "Watch, for ye know not the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh," is the lesson of the parable.

Lesson 3. Again, the kingdom of Heaven is likened to a man traveling to a far country, and leaving his goods in the charge of his servants, giving to one five talents, to another two, and to another one. After a time he returns, and receives their report. The one who received five talents has traded with them and now has five talents more; and the one who received two talents has gained other two. To each alike the master says, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy lord." The one who received one talent returns it without any increase, saying, "I knew thou art a hard man, and I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth; lo, there thou hast that is thine." "Take it away," says the master, "and give it to him that hath ten talents, for to him that hath shall be given, but cast the unprofitable servant into outer darkness." Faithfulness is rewarded, and unfaithfulness is punished. We must work as well as watch to be ready for the coming of the Son of Man.

Lesson 4. Jesus is at the home of Simon in Bethany. Mary and Lazarus are among the other guests, and Martha is serving. As Jesus reclines at the feast, Mary pours very costly ointment upon His head. To the disciples this seems a great waste, for, they say, the ointment could have been sold and given to the poor. To Christ it is worthily spent, for it is a token of Mary's great love and devotion to her Lord. "She did it for my burial," He tells the disciples, and adds that "wherever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this that this woman hath done be told for a memorial of her." Judas now decides to commit his deed of treachery, and going to the high priests agrees to betray Jesus into their hands for thirty pieces of silver.

Lesson 5. It is Thursday of Christ's last week on earth. The disciples ask Him where He will eat the Passover, and He directs them to go to a certain man in Jerusalem, and tell him that He will keep the Passover

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at his house. He gives this indefinite direction that Judas may not know in time to betray Him during the feast. While they are eating, Jesus tells them that one of them shall betray Him. "Lord, is it I?" each one exclaims. "He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me. It had been good for that man if he had not been born." "Master, is it I?" asks Judas. "Thou hast said," returns Jesus. Taking bread and blessing it and wine and giving thanks, Jesus gives both to His disciples, telling them to eat the bread that represents His body, and drink the wine that represents His blood "shed for many for the remission of sins." After Jesus speaks many comforting words to them, they all sing a hymn and go out with Him to the Garden of Gethsemane.

Lesson 6. In Gethsemane Jesus with Peter, James, and John leaves the disciples and goes farther on. In great distress of mind, Jesus asks the three disciples to watch with Him while He goes still farther to pray. "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt," is His prayer. He returns and finds the three disciples sleeping. "What! could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak," is His tender admonition to them. Again He prays, and returning again finds them asleep. A third time He prays and then returns victorious, His will is now His Father's will. To the sleeping disciples He says, "Sleep on now and take your rest." He sees the band of men approaching to arrest Him, and goes forth to meet them. Judas steps forward and kisses Him, the betrayal sign agreed on, and the others take hold of Him to lead Him away.

Lesson 7. Jesus is taken first to Annas, and then to Caiaphas, the high priest. Peter follows afar off, enters the court of the palace where Jesus is being judged, and there thrice denies that he knows his Master. The Council has sought false witnesses against Jesus, but even these are hard to find who agree together. Finally two testify that they heard Jesus say He could destroy the temple and build it in three days. "Answereth thou nothing?" says Caiaphas to Jesus, but Jesus remains silent. Caiaphas then puts Him on oath and demands whether He is Christ, the Son of God. "Yes," answers Jesus, and further adds, "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." The high priest rends his clothes in token of horror, and declares that Jesus has spoken blasphemy. He calls for the verdict. "Guilty," they all answer. Then they spit in Jesus' face, and mockingly say, "Prophesy unto us, thou Christ, who it is that smote thee!"

Lesson 8. Jesus had been brought to Pilate for sentence, but after examining Him Pilate tells the members of the Sanhedrim and the people that neither he nor Herod, to whom he had sent Jesus, could find any fault in Him, and he offers to chastise Him and then release Him. The people demand Barabbas, the murderer, instead, for according to custom, Pilate must release one prisoner to them at the Passover. Again Pilate seeks

to change their mind, and they cry out the more "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" "Why, what fault hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him." But the rabble shout and cry, "Crucify him," and Pilate yields to them. He releases Barabbas, and hands Jesus over "to their will."

Lesson 9. Jesus is taken to a place called Calvary, and there crucified between two thieves; above His head is placed the inscription, "This is the king of the Jews." "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," is His first word from the cross. The four soldiers divide His garments among them, casting lots for the seamless robe. The people "stand beholding," while the rulers mock Him, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God." The soldiers deride Him in the same way, and even one of the evil-doers on the cross exclaims, "If thou be the Christ, save thyself and us." The other evil-doer rebukes the scoffing one, telling him that they only suffer justly for their deeds, but Jesus has done nothing amiss. "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom," he says to Jesus. "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise," is the answer. From the sixth to the ninth hour there is darkness and the veil of the temple is torn from top to bottom. "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit," are the last words of the dying Christ.

Lesson 10. Friday and Saturday have passed, and it is now Sunday morning. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary are the first at the sepulcher. There has been a great earthquake, and the angel of the Lord has rolled away the stone from the tomb. "For fear of him the keepers did shake, and become as dead men," but to the women the angel says, "Fear not ye. Jesus is risen as he said. Go quickly and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead." Suddenly Jesus Himself stands before them as they are hastening on their way, and says, "All hail." They come and hold Him by the feet, worshiping Him. "Go tell my brethren," Jesus directs them, "that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me." The soldiers who had been on guard at the tomb have meanwhile gone to the high priests and told them all that has happened, and the priests have given money to the soldiers and bade them say that the disciples came by night and stole Jesus away while they slept.

Lesson 11. The scene is now in Galilee. The disciples are gathered together, and Jesus suddenly appears before them. "Peace be unto you," is His greeting, but the disciples are terrified, supposing they are seeing a spirit. "Why are ye troubled?" questions Jesus. "Behold my hands and feet, that it is I myself; handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have." Still they believe not for joy, and to reassure them Jesus asks for food and eats with them. During the forty days after His resurrection Jesus at different times teaches them the Scriptures. He gives them their commission to preach the gospel to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem, and He directs them to wait in Jerusalem till they

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receive power from on high. The time has now come for His departure from earth. He leads His faithful followers to the Mount of Olives facing Bethany, and lifting up His hands and blessing them He departs and is carried up to Heaven.

A REVIEW BY DICKENS

Tell where in the Gospels is found each of these scenes mentioned by Dickens in his *Christmas Stories:*

What images do I associate with the Christmas music as I see these images set forth on the Christmas tree? Known before others, keeping far apart from all the others . . . an angel, speaking to a group of shepherds in a field; some travelers, with eyes uplifted, following a star; a babe in a manger; a child in a spacious temple, talking with grave men; a solemn figure, with a mild and beautiful face, raising a dead girl by the hand; again, near a city gate, calling back the son of a widow, on his bier, to life; a crowd of people looking through the opened roof of a chamber where He sits, and letting down a sick person on a bed, with ropes; the same, in a tempest, walking on the water to a ship; again, on a sea-shore, teaching a great multitude; again, with a child upon His knee; again, restoring sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, health to the sick, strength to the lame, knowledge to the ignorant; again, dying upon a cross, watched by armed soldiers, a thick darkness coming on, the earth beginning to shake, and only one voice heard: "Forgive them, for they know not what they do."

THE EVENTS AND DISCOURSES OF PASSION WEEK AND THE FOLLOWING FORTY DAYS

Saturday. Anointing at the supper in Bethany.

Sunday. Triumphal entry of Jerusalem; Jesus weeping over Jerusalem; return to Bethany.

Monday. Cursing of the fig-tree on the way to Jerusalem; cleansing of the temple; hosannas of the children in temple; healing blind and lame; return to Bethany.

Tuesday. Fig-tree found withered on way to Jerusalem; authority of Christ questioned in the temple; parable of the Two Sons in the Vineyard; parable of the Marriage of the King's Son; question of the Pharisees and Herodians about tribute; question of the Sadducees about the resurrection; Christ's unanswered question; question of the lawyer about the Great Commandment; warning and woes in regard to the Pharisees and scribes; widow's two mites; Greeks seek Jesus; on leaving Jerusalem, prediction of destruction of temple; discourse on Mount of Olives about destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world; parable of the Ten Virgins; parable of the Talents; a picture of the judgment; return to Bethany; conspiracy between chief priests and Judas.

Wednesday. No event recorded.

Thursday. Return to Jerusalem and preparation for Passover; beginning of Passover supper in the evening; strife as to who was greatest; washing of disciples' feet; announcement of betrayal; institution of Lord's Supper; prediction of Peter's denial; incident of the swords; farewell discourse and intercessory prayer; departure at midnight over brook Kedron; agony in Garden of Gethsemane; betrayal and arrest; incident of Malchus.

Friday. One A. M., hearing before Annas; before day, trial by Caiaphas; maltreatment of Jesus; three denials of Peter; at daybreak, formal condemnation by Sanhedrim; Jesus taken to Pilate; in the morning, remorse and suicide of Judas; Pilate's first attempt to release Jesus; Jesus sent to Herod; Pilate's second attempt to release Jesus; choice of Barabbas; scourging (*Ecce Homo*); delivery of Jesus to death; mockery by soldiers; on the way to Golgotha; 9 A. M., crucifixion and first word from the cross; penitent robber and second word; Jesus commends His mother to John, third word; darkness, fourth to seventh words; 3 P. M., death; veil of temple rent, words of centurion; Joseph and Nicodemus bury Jesus, women visit the tomb.

Saturday. Guard at the tomb.

Sunday. Visit of women to sepulcher; vision of angels; Peter and John visit sepulcher; Christ's first appearance to Mary Magdalene; second appearance to the women; report of guard; appearances to Peter and to the two disciples on the way to Emmaus; appearance to the disciples in absence of Thomas.

Sunday, a week later. Appearance to disciples, Thomas being present.

April, May. Appearance to seven disciples fishing; to the whole number of apostles; to the five hundred; to James.

Thursday, May 18. Final appearance at Jerusalem. Ascension from Mount of Olives.

QUESTIONS ON THE YEAR'S STUDY OF CHRIST'S LIFE

Into what nine parts may the life of Christ be divided? The names, limits and dates of each. Who wrote the story of Christ's life? Which of the Evangelists were apostles? Who was Matthew? For whom did he write? Mark? For whom did he write? Luke? For whom did he write? John? For whom did he write?

First Quarter.

1. Which two gospels tell the story of Christ's birth?
2. Where and when was Christ born?
3. Who brought to Jerusalem the news of His birth?
4. Where in the Gospels is the story of His first visit to Jerusalem told?
5. What do we know about His boyhood and youth?
6. What is the first story told about Him in the book of Mark?
7. Who was John the Baptist? What did he accomplish?

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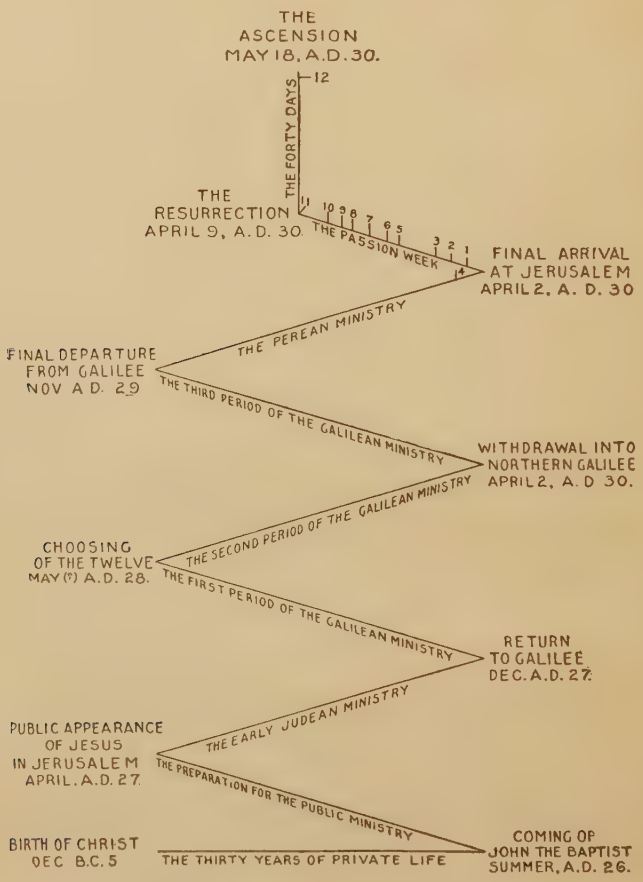
8. Why was Jesus tempted? What was the nature of each temptation?
9. Why did He leave Judea and go to Galilee?
10. What four fishermen did He call to be His disciples?


THE ASCENSION MAY 18, A.D. 30.
12
THE FORTY DAYS
11
10
9
8
7
6
5
3
2
1
14
THE RESURRECTION APRIL 9, A.D. 30
THE PASSION WEEK
FINAL ARRIVAL AT JERUSALEM APRIL 2, A. D. 30
THE PEREAN MINISTRY
FINAL DEPARTURE FROM GALILEE NOV A D. 29
THE THIRD PERIOD OF THE GALILEAN MINISTRY
WITHDRAWAL INTO NORTHERN GALILEE APRIL 2, A. D 30.
THE SECOND PERIOD OF THE GALILEAN MINISTRY
CHOOSING OF THE TWELVE MAY (?) A.D. 28.
THE FIRST PERIOD OF THE GALILEAN MINISTRY
RETURN TO GALILEE DEC. A.D. 27.
THE EARLY JUDEAN MINISTRY
PUBLIC APPEARANCE OF JESUS IN JERUSALEM APRIL, A.D. 27.
THE PREPARATION FOR THE PUBLIC MINISTRY
BIRTH OF CHRIST DEC B.C. 5
THE THIRTY YEARS OF PRIVATE LIFE
COMING OF JOHN THE BAPTIST SUMMER, A.D. 26.

11. Why is His first Sabbath in Capernaum called "The Sabbath of Miracles?"
12. Why did the Pharisees find fault with Him when He cured the man let down through the roof?
13. To whom did He speak the words of the Sermon on the Mount?
14. What three lessons are from this Sermon. Repeat the Beatitudes.

Second Quarter.

1. Tell the first parable.

2. What were several of the Sabbath controversies with the Pharisees? What did Christ say was lawful on the Sabbath?
3. What two Gentiles in this quarter's lessons showed remarkable faith?
4. Whom did Jesus raise from the dead?
5. What parable did He give on the occasion of His anointing by the woman that was a sinner? What was the purpose of the parable?
6. What parables did He speak by the Sea of Galilee?
7. What miracle was wrought in Decapolis?
8. Why did Herod say that Jesus was John the Baptist?
9. Why did Jesus go to the desert region where He miraculously fed the five thousand?
10. Why did He go toward Tyre and Sidon, where the Syrophenician woman pleaded with Him for her daughter's cure?
11. What conversation took place near Cæsarea Philippi?
12. What was the purpose of the transfiguration?

Third Quarter.

1. How did Jesus teach His disciples humility?
2. How did He teach them the duty of forgiveness?
3. How did He teach a lawyer the meaning of the word neighbor?
4. How did He teach His disciples how to pray?
5. How did He teach the Jews true hospitality?
6. How did He teach that one may fail to gain entrance into the kingdom of Heaven?
7. How did He teach the Father's great love? In what Gospel only is this parable given?
8. How did He teach the lessons of persevering and sincere prayer?
9. What rich man was almost saved? What rich man was saved?
10. What miracle did Jesus perform near Jericho?
11. Upon what day did Jesus enter Jerusalem in triumph?
12. What occurred on Monday?
13. What questions did the Pharisees and Sadducees ask Jesus? What unanswered question did He in turn ask them?

Fourth Quarter.

1. How many days of Christ's life were covered by this quarter's lessons? How many days between the resurrection and the ascension?
2. What day was the great day of teaching? (Tuesday.) What lessons belong to that day? What five parables were spoken?
3. What do we know about Wednesday?
4. What took place Thursday evening? Thursday night?
5. What trials were held before daybreak on Friday?
6. What took place after daybreak on Friday morning?
7. At what hour was Jesus crucified? At what hour did He die?
8. What were the Seven Words from the cross?
9. What does the resurrection prove?
10. Why was the ascension necessary?

THE GEOGRAPHY OF PALESTINE IN THE TIME OF CHRIST

POSITION AND EXTENT

1. **Syria.** At the eastern end of the Mediterranean, the Atlantic Ocean of the first centuries, is the peninsula of Arabia. The Greeks gave the name Syria, a shortened form of Assyria, to all that part of the peninsula comprised in the Assyrian Empire. Later they limited the name to that part west of the Euphrates, and finally to Syria proper, the tract of land seventy to one hundred miles in width, that extended the length of the Mediterranean on the east, a distance of nearly four hundred miles. A sea of water was its boundary on the west, a sea of sand its boundary on the east, while the Taurus Mountains were its limit on the north, and Egypt was its limit on the south.

2. **Palestine.** The southern part of Syria was Palestine, limited on the north by the mountains of Lebanon, on the east and south by the desert, and on the west by the Great Sea, as the Mediterranean was called in ancient times. In those days the sea was, like the desert, a barrier, not a means of communication as at present.

3. Another limit was given to Palestine by the Jews themselves. As Edmond Stapfer says, "Outside the city of Jerusalem there was an admixture of pagan population, and the greater the distance from the Holy City the more the pagan element predominated. Where the population became entirely pagan, and the Jewish element disappeared altogether, it ceased to be Palestine."

4. Very isolated was this little country by its natural boundaries, for "Nature had shut Palestine in and turned the key," and yet it lay between the great nations of antiquity: on the one side the Babylonians, Assyrians, Medes and Persians; on the other the Egyptians, Phenicians, Greeks and Romans, and across Palestine went the great caravan routes from one to another.

5. **The Names of Palestine.** In Old Testament times the country west of the Jordan was called Canaan. When the ancient Hebrews took possession of the land, they called it the Land of the Hebrews, or the Land of Israel. In the Talmud (the writing of the Jewish teachers in the first centuries after Christ) it is still spoken of as the Land of Israel, or simply as The Land.

6. After the Exile, the name Israelites was changed to Jews, and the Land of Israel was called the Land of Judah, for only the tribes of Judah and Benjamin had returned from captivity.

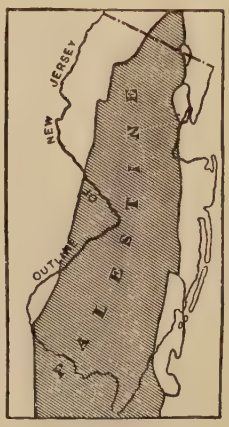
7. We are indebted to the Greeks for our modern name of Palestine.

They called the Land of Judah Syria Palaistiné (meaning that part of Syria inhabited by the Philistines), and later used the adjective Palaistiné alone to designate the region. The Romans changed the name to Palestina, whence our word Palestine.

8. From the prophet Zechariah comes the term The Holy Land. In Hebrews 11.9 it is called the Land of Promise.

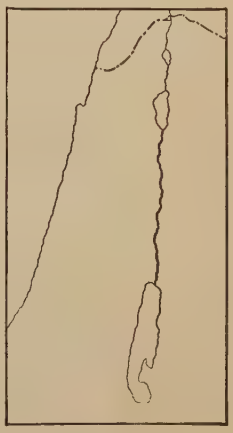
9. **Size.** The word Palestine is used both for Western Palestine, the part west of the Jordan, and for Palestine proper, which includes also a section east of the Jordan.

10. Western Palestine has about the same area as the State of New Jersey. (New Jersey, 7,455 sq. m.; Palestine, 6,400 sq. m.) In the accompanying diagram, New Jersey and Western Palestine are drawn to the same scale. The area of Palestine proper is ten or eleven thousand square miles. Belgium and Maryland have each this area.



Western Palestine compared with New Jersey.

11. "From Dan to Beersheba," usually considered the length of the country, was one hundred and forty miles. The greatest length of Western Palestine is one hundred and sixty miles and its average width forty miles. It is, as you see, a very small country, for its length could be crossed by rail in less than six hours and its breadth in less than two hours. From its highest mountain peaks a glimpse of almost the entire country can be had. After Jesus was brought back in infancy from Egypt, His entire life was spent within this small territory. We have no record of any journey farther north than Cæsarea Philippi, south than Bethlehem, east than Bethabara near the Jordan, and west than the region of Tyre and Sidon.


Outline Map

12. **Striking Features.** Few regions have a straighter coast-line than Palestine. About a third of the distance down from the north is Mount Carmel, and above this headland there is a curve in the coast-line. Harbors there are none. In the diagram, observe that the southern line is more than twice as long as the northern. The southern represents ninety miles, and the northern, forty miles.

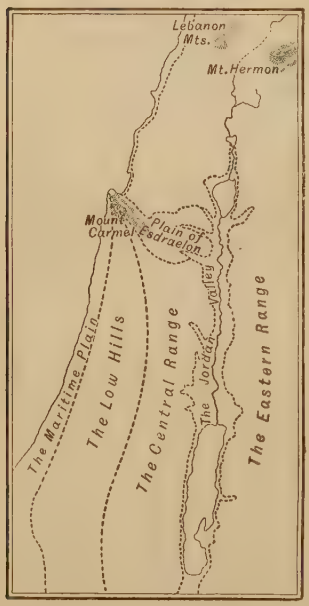
13. Directly east of Mount Carmel—a distance of thirty miles—is the Sea of Galilee. This lake is thirteen miles long and eight miles in greatest

width. Sixty-six miles south of the Sea of Galilee, and fifty-five miles east of the Mediterranean, is the northern end of the Dead Sea. This long narrow lake is forty-seven miles long and about nine miles broad. On the southeast a tongue of land projects into the lake.

14. Ten miles north of the Sea of Galilee is the little Lake Huleh, or Lake Merom, about four miles long. From four streams which unite above Lake Huleh the Jordan flows southward, through Lake Huleh and the Sea of Galilee, and then onward till it is lost in the Dead Sea.

RELIEF AND DRAINAGE

15. **Five Parallel Regions.** In general, five parallel regions divide the country lengthwise, as shown in the diagram. (1) The Maritime Plain, (2) the Low Hills, (3) the Central Range, (4) the Jordan Valley, and (5) the Eastern Range.



The Physical Regions

16. North of Carmel the Plain of Esdraelon extends southeastward, breaking through the Low Hills and Central Range, and uniting the Jordan Valley with the Maritime Plain.

17. **The Maritime Plain.** This sea-coast plain is a few hundred feet above sea-level. North of Mount Carmel it is narrow in Galilee and widens out in Phenicia. South of Mount Carmel the coast trends westward more than does the Central Range, and this makes the Maritime Plain much wider at the south than at the north. Between the Sea and the headland of Carmel the beach is but two hundred yards wide; at the southern end of Carmel it is six miles; at Joppa twelve miles, and still farther south, thirty miles in width.

18. Between Mount Carmel and Joppa it was called the Plain of Sharon; south of Joppa, the Plain of Philistia. The soil was very fertile. Josephus calls the plain "the Forest," for it was once covered with oak trees.

19. While many Jews lived on this plain in the time of Christ, they were strangers there, for in Old Testament times this strip had always belonged to foreign peoples. The plain has been a famous war-path, where have marched the armies of Thothmes, Rameses, Sennacherib, Cambyses, Alexander, Pompey, and Napoleon.

20. **The Low Hills.** The Hebrew word for this section was

The Shephelah. It is the region adjoining the Maritime Plain, and consists of low rounded hills from three hundred to five hundred feet high, with many cross valleys. North of the Valley of Ajalon the hills are but foot hills of the Central Range; south of that valley they are separated from the Central Range by a series of valleys. This Shephelah has been the famous "debatable land" between the Israelites and Canaanites, the Maccabees and the Syrians, the Crusaders and Saladin.

21. **The Central Range.** In Syria beyond the boundary of Palestine there are two lofty parallel ranges of mountains separated by a narrow valley, the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon Mountains. Their extensions southward are the Central Range and the Eastern Range of Palestine.

22. Although the Lebanon Mountains are outside the boundary of Palestine, they belong to a study of its geography, because they exert so great an influence upon its climate and character. Upon them the vapor-laden winds from the Mediterranean deposit their moisture, which is sent down the Jordan Valley by the Jordan River. The word Lebanon means white. The highest peak is over ten thousand feet in altitude.

Section North and South, Longitude of Jerusalem

23. The Central Range, although the western of the two ranges of Palestine, is called central because historically it has been the center of the land. In Upper Galilee it is a plateau walled by hills; the highest peak is four thousand feet; in Lower Galilee the ranges run east and west, about one thousand feet lower, and then sink to the Plain of Esdraelon. South of Esdraelon the Central Range rises again, consisting at first of separate groups of mountains (in Samaria), and then becoming a tableland two thousand four hundred feet high in northern Judea, whence it gradually descends to the plateau of the "Desert of Wandering" on the south.

24. On the west the descent to the Maritime Plain is gradual; on the east the descent to the Jordan Valley is short and precipitous.

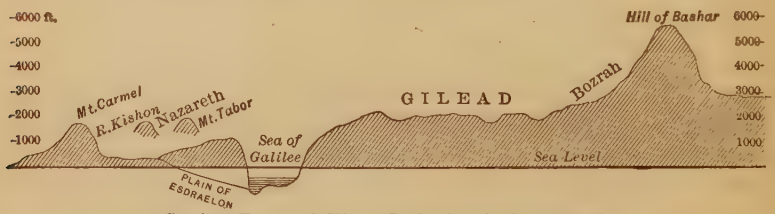
25. **The Plain of Esdraelon.** This is a triangular plain having its apex at the Mediterranean north of Mount Carmel. On the north the Galilean hills form a steep wall a thousand feet high, with Mount Tabor near the Jordan; on the south are Mount Carmel and the lower hills of Samaria, including Mount Gilboa; on the east is the river Jordan.

26. The eastern part of the plain was called the Plain of Megiddo,

and the central part the Valley of Jezreel in ancient times. It is a remarkably fertile plain, watered by the Kishon, a turbulent stream in winter, but very small in summer, which flows into the Mediterranean.

27. More battles have been fought on this plain than on any other battle-field of the world. "Here for four thousand years was the great trail of the nations," says William Eleroy Curtis. "It naturally became the arena of war between the lowlanders, who trusted in their chariots; the Ishmaelites, who fought from the saddle; and the Israelite highlanders of the surrounding mountains." Jesus must have often looked upon this plain from the hills south of Nazareth, and He must have often walked across it during His ministry.

28. **Mount Carmel.** "Some hills suggest immovableness," says Doctor George Adam Smith in his *Historical Geography of the Holy Land,* "while others, with their long greyhound backs, are full of motion. It is the peculiarity of Carmel to combine these effects, and to impress those who look upon it with the sense of one long stride over the plain and a firm foothold upon the sea." The name Carmel means the garden, for in ancient times the hill was cultivated. In the Book of



Section East and West, Latitude of Mt. Carmel

Kings is told the story of the contest here fought out as to whether Jehovah or Baal had the elements in control. It is of this contest that one always thinks when Carmel is mentioned.

29. From the summit one can see over all Palestine. Says Doctor Smith: "Before him who stands on Carmel Nature rises in a series of great stages from sea to Alp: the Mediterranean, the long coast from north to south, with its hot sands and plains; Esdraelon, covered with wheat; Tabor and the lower hills of Galilee with their oaks, — then, over the barer peaks of Upper Galilee and the haze that is about them, the clear snow of Hermon, hanging like an only cloud in the sky."

30. **The Jordan Valley.** The Jordan Valley is a deep, colossal chasm from five to fifteen miles broad, through which flows the Jordan River. It extends from Mount Hermon throughout the length of Palestine. Just below Lake Huleh the valley sinks below sea-level; at the Sea of Galilee it is six hundred and eighty feet below, and at the Dead Sea it reaches a depth of one thousand two hundred and ninety-two feet below the Mediterranean, the lowest valley on the surface of the earth.

35
36
34
33
32
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Mt. Lebanon
Anti-Lebanon
Mt. Leontes
R.
Mt. Hermon
Waters of Merom
Sea of Galilee
Mt. Tabor
R. Kishon
Mt. Carmel
Yarmuk
R.
Mt. Gilboa
MARITIME PLAIN
HILLS
RANGE
R. Jordan
Hills of Gilead
Mt. Gerizim
Jabbok
LOW HILLS
CENTRAL RANGE
EASTERN
Dead Sea
Mt. Nebo
R. Arnon
RELIEF MAP OF
PALESTINE
SCALE OF MILES
0 5 10 15 20 25 50

(Below the Dead Sea the valley rises to a height of three hundred feet above sea-level, and then sinks to the Gulf of Akabah.) In this trench so far below the level of the sea, Christ lived and worked during the greater part of His public ministry.

31. **The Upper Jordan River and Lake Huleh.** Four streams unite before entering Lake Huleh, and each one is claimed as the source of the Jordan. Lake Huleh is an expansion of the river, about four miles long. In the Old Testament it is called "the Waters of Merom." Swamps and jungles of papyrus reeds surround the lake.

32. The word Jordan means the Descender, the Down-Comer; in the nine miles between Lake Huleh and the Sea of Galilee it falls six hundred and eighty feet. The deposits which it brings down in its tumultuous course have formed a delta through which it hastens into the Sea of Galilee.

33. **The Sea of Galilee** is the most famous of all the inland waters of the earth. It is pear-shaped, or harp-shaped, and in the Old Testament is called the Sea of Chinnereth, from *Kinnor,* the Hebrew word for harp. It is called the Sea of Galilee from the province, the Lake of Gennesaret from the plain, and the Sea of Tiberias from the city, all on its western shore. "Jehovah hath created seven seas," said the rabbis, "but the Sea of Gennesaret is His delight."

The Sea of Galilee and Surroundings

34. The Sea of Galilee is surrounded by hills, but between them and the lake there is a beach that varies from a few hundred yards to half a mile or more in width. Passing around the lake to the left, one crosses on the northwest the beautiful Plain of Gennesaret, a famous plain a mile broad by two and a half miles long, called by Josephus "that unparalleled garden of God." About five miles away from the Sea of Galilee, southwest of Magdala, is Kurn Hattin, or the Horns of Hattin, where Christ delivered the Sermon on the Mount. The mountain is often spoken of as the "Mount of Beatitudes." The green slopes soon change to the dark imprisoning cliffs at Tiberias. Then the ribbon-like coast widens till at the southern end the Jordan Valley, four miles wide, stretches away southward. Upon the eastern side of the lake the wall of hills is higher than on the western side, rising to a height of a thousand feet and more, but it leaves a fertile beach half a mile wide except at Khersa, where it slopes precipitately to the sea. On the northeast is the plain of el-Batiha, where Jesus fed the five thousand.

35. In the time of Christ the shores of the lake were green and fruitful. The country was well-wooded, and Josephus says the climate was very

pleasant. Now the shores are a wilderness. The heat from April to July is intolerable, travelers tell us, and Doctor James Stapfer says the mosquitoes and flies are so troublesome that one can well understand how, in that country, the devil came to be called the god of flies, Beelzebub. "Where there are now no trees, in the time of Christ there were great woods; where there are marshes, there were noble gardens; where there is but a boat or two, there were fleets of sails; where there is one town (Tiberias) and not more than three or four small villages, there were nine or ten flourishing towns," says Doctor George Adam Smith. Even the site of some of the cities can not now be determined.

36. **The Lower Jordan Valley.** This the Arabs call El Ghôr, the Rift, or the Depression. It is a long valley, only three or four miles wide, except in two places—at Bethshan it expands to a width of six or seven miles, and at Jericho its width becomes fourteen miles.

37. Upon its western edge rises the Central Range, from eight hundred to fifteen hundred feet above the floor of the valley, broken only by the Plain of Esdraelon, and on its eastern edge the hills of Gilead (Perea), two thousand feet above the plain, broken only by the valleys of the Yarmuk and Jabbok.

38. The heat in this valley is intense from early spring till late autumn. Wherever there is water, vegetation is rank, growing as high as one's shoulders. There are numerous swamps. Towards the Dead Sea the ground becomes encrusted with salt, and the Hebrew name of the Arabah, the Desert, is most appropriate.

39. This Lower Jordan Valley is the region called in the New Testament The Wilderness, where John the Baptist lived and worked. Thoughts would come to him here of the deeds of Elijah and Elisha, and here he would get his figures of judgment, the scorpions and vipers fleeing before the fires in the dry scrub, and the ax laid at the root of the trees, for wood-cutters were busy in this wilderness. Here Christ came to be baptized of John, and here He "was alone with the wild beasts" when He suffered His temptation.

40. **The Lower Jordan.** From the Sea of Galilee to the Dead Sea the Jordan crosses a distance of sixty-five miles, but the river itself is two hundred miles long with all its windings. It is a swift, turbulent river, having many rapids and cascades, for in the sixty-five miles it falls six hundred and ten feet. Near the Sea of Galilee its fall is forty feet a mile.

41. A dense jungle marks the limit to which the river rises in flood time (April), while ugly mud banks and driftwood line the narrower bed of the river.

42. **The Dead Sea.** This lake is called in the Old Testament the Salt Sea. Its surface, as we have seen, is one thousand two hundred and ninety feet below the level of the sea, but its bottom is one thousand three hundred feet lower still at the entrance of the Jordan. From this

point it shelves rapidly upward to only eight to fourteen feet in depth at the southern end.

43. It is said that no lake looks so blue and beautiful as do the waters of the Dead Sea. It is five times as salt as the ocean, for while it receives four or five small streams besides the Jordan River, it has no outlet, and the constant evaporation due to the excessive heat of the region, leaves the water bitter with brine. No fish can live in the lake, and so great is the density of the water that no one was ever drowned in it, though the bather, even as in our Great Salt Lake, has to make a constant effort to keep his head from going under.

44. Along the shore there is, of course, no vegetation. There are deposits of sulphur and bitumen, and here and there tall figures of salt. Naturally one of them is called "Lot's Wife."

45. **The Eastern Range.** This has been called by Doctor George Adam Smith "the most novel feature of the Holy Land, the elevating and solemn background of all that is poor and mean in the scenery of Western Palestine." "Who," says Dean Stanley, "that has ever traveled in Palestine has not longed to cross the Jordan Valley to those mysterious hills which close every eastward view with their long horizontal outline, their ever-shadowing heights, their deep purple shade?"

46. This range extends from north to south a distance of one hundred and fifty miles, and varies in width from thirty to eighty miles. Its average elevation is two thousand feet above the sea, and much more above the Jordan Valley. The western margin is made still higher by extinct volcanoes. The elevation gives this region a temperate climate. Three large rivers, the Yarmuk, the Jabbok, and the Arnon, flow into the Jordan from the eastern plateau.

47. **Mount Hermon.** This great white dome, "the King of Syria," stands alone in the northern part of the Eastern Range. It is the southern end of the Anti-Lebanon Range, or "Lebanon toward the sun-rising." This is the loftiest mountain in the Holy Land, for it towers nine thousand feet above the sea, and from every point it dominates the whole land of Palestine. Snow remains upon it until autumn every year. Upon Mount Hermon occurred the transfiguration of Jesus.

48. **Mount Nebo** rises near the northern end of the Dead Sea. From here Moses beheld the promised land, and here he died.

CLIMATE

49. **Diversity.** The temperature of this little country varies greatly, owing to its varying altitudes. It lies between 31° and 33° 20′ north latitude. While the summit of Mount Hermon, nine thousand two hundred feet above sea-level, is covered with snow, the temperature sometimes rises to 118° in the Lower Jordan Valley, twelve hundred and ninety-two feet below sea-level. In general, we may say that the climate

of the highland regions is temperate, the Maritime Plain and the Upper Jordan Valley subtropical, and the Lower Jordan Valley tropical.

50. **Seasons.** There are two seasons in Palestine, the rainy season from October to April, and the dry season from April to October. The Bible speaks of "the early" and "the later rains." The early rains occur late in October or early in November. They last for a day or for several days at a time, and loosen the parched earth for plowing. After a period of mild weather, the heavy winter rains begin about the middle of December. They are well called "the Pourers." The later rains are the heavy showers of March and April. Showers rarely occur in May. No rain whatever falls between June and October, even a cloud is almost unknown. Upon the highlands snow sometimes falls in winter, but melts quickly.

51. **Prevailing Winds.** The prevailing winds during winter are from the west, and they come laden with moisture from the Mediterranean. "When ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it is," says Jesus. (Luke 12.54.) The north winds prevail in summer, and "fair weather cometh out of the north." (Job 37.22.)

52. The east and south winds come from across the hot desert. "When ye see the south wind blow, ye say, There will be heat; and it cometh to pass." (Luke 12.55.)

53. **Storms on the Sea of Galilee.** Sudden and violent storms are frequent on this lake. The heat in this low trench, six hundred and eighty-two feet below the Mediterranean, warms the air over the lake so that it rises, and the colder, heavier air from the tablelands above rushes down every wady (water course) to take its place, lashing the waters into fury. (Matt. 8.24.)

THE POLITICAL DIVISIONS

54. **The Divisions Made after the Death of Herod.** When Christ was born, Herod the Great, who had ruled all Palestine under the Romans, was drawing near the close of his long reign. He died in 4 B. C., and his kingdom was divided among his sons, none of whom had his ability or power.

55. Archilaus received Idumea, Judea, and Samaria, west of the Dead Sea and the Lower Jordan, and was given the title of ethnarch. He was deposed by Rome in A. D. 6, and his territory was made an imperial province ruled by procurators appointed from among the Roman knights. But little is known about these procurators till Pontius Pilate, the fifth procurator, was appointed in A. D. 27. He held his office till deposed in A. D. 36.

56. To Herod Antipas was given Galilee west of the Jordan and north of Samaria, and Perea east of the Lower Jordan and Dead Sea, with the

title of tetrarch. He reigned till after the death of Jesus, and was deposed about the year 39.

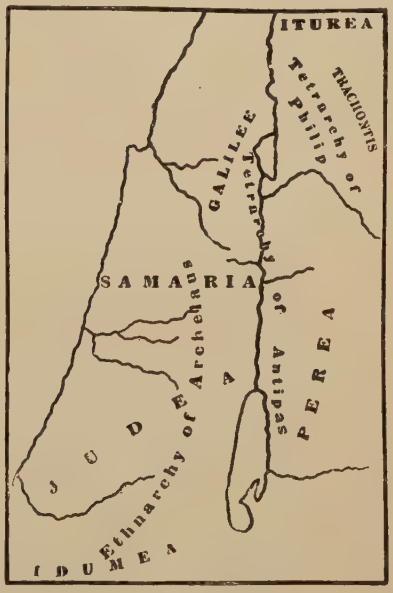
57. Philip, the best of the sons of Herod the Great, was made tetrarch of the country north and east of the Sea of Galilee. He also reigned throughout Christ's life, and died in A. D. 34.

58. The political divisions of Palestine during the life of Jesus were, therefore, (1) Judea and Samaria under the rule of Roman procurators, (2) Galilee and Perea under Herod Antipas, and (3) small principalities east of Galilee and north of Perea, under the rule of Philip.

59. Palestine west of the Jordan is the Palestine of history. Between the Jordan and the sea the three provinces lay one above the other; Judea on the south, Samaria in the center, and Galilee on the north.

60. **Judea.** Judea in Christ's day was larger than in Old Testament times, for Idumea, or Edom, on the south was conquered and annexed about a hundred years before His birth. Including all that was desert, the area of Judea was about the size of the state of Delaware. South of Idumea was the Negeb, a word meaning the Dry or Parched Land, but translated in our version of the Old Testament as The South.

61. The Judea of history is the part occupying the Central Range, a plateau from two thousand to three thousand feet above the sea, perhaps thirty-five miles by twelve to seventeen miles in area. It was a pastoral country, but vineyards flourished and olives and figs grew in abundance. While there were very fertile spots, as in the Valley of Hinnom near Jerusalem and in the Valley of Eschol near Hebron, the greater part consisted of stony ground.



Political Divisions of Palestine

62. Two features impress every traveler in Judea, the rocky soil and the deep, desolate abyss on the east. Says Doctor George Adam Smith in his *Historical Geography:* "Across the Dead Sea rise the hills of Moab, high and precipitous, and it is their bare edge, almost unbroken, and with nothing visible beyond save a castle or a crag, which forms the eastern horizon of Judea. The simple name by which that horizon is known to the Jews—the Mountains of the Other-Side, or the Mountains of Those-Across—is more expressive

than anything else could be of the great vacancy between . . . When you realize that this vacancy, this howling waste, came within the reach of nearly every Jewish child; when you climb the Mount of Olives, or any hill about Bethlehem, and, looking east, see those fifteen miles of chaos, sinking to a stretch of the Dead Sea, you begin to understand the influence of the Desert on Jewish imagination and literature. It gave the ancient natives of Judea, as it gives the mere visitor of to-day, the sense of living next door to doom; the awe of the power of God, who can make contiguous regions so opposite in character."

63. **Samaria.** This province was smaller than either Judea or Galilee, midway between Delaware and Rhode Island in size. Though a part of the same Central Range, Samaria is very different in aspect from Judea. It has many isolated groups of hills. Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim—the latter the mountain where the Samaritans worshipped—are the most important in Bible history, and between them is the Vale of Shechem, where Jesus had His conversation with the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well.

64. "Rottenness and swift ruin" was the doom pronounced upon Samaria by the Jews because of her luxury, her traffic with foreigners, and her idols. The Jews never considered Samaria a part of the Holy Land. They "had no dealings with the Samaritans," and they avoided passing through Samaria on their way from Judea to Galilee by going either by way of the sea-coast (for the Maritime Plain south of Mount Carmel belonged to Judea) or up the hot Jordan Valley on the eastern side. When Jesus went through Samaria He had a journey of but twenty-three miles.

65. **Galilee.** Galilee extended northward to the Litany, eastward to the Jordan, southward to the lower edge of the Plain of Esdraelon, and westward to the sea and the territory of Tyre, or Phenicia.

66. Lower Galilee consists of parallel ranges, nowhere over eighteen hundred and fifty feet high, separated by broad, fertile valleys. In Upper Galilee there is magnificent scenery, especially in the extreme northern part. The plateau is surrounded by hills from two thousand to four thousand feet high. Extinct craters, lava beds, and hot sulphur springs give evidence of volcanic upheavals in Galilee. "Try to cut out the mountain scenes from Christ's Life," says Doctor Ramsay, "and how much poorer would the Gospels be!"

67. The geography and environment of Judea and Galilee account for the difference in the spirit and temperament of their peoples, and this difference was the reason for Christ's living and working in Galilee rather than in Judea during the greater part of His ministry. Judea is characterized in general by bare hillsides, stony soil, and absence of rivers, and is dominated by the nearness of the desert chasm below her on the east; Galilee, on the other hand, is characterized by wooded slopes, fertile soil, cultivated fields, and abundance of rivers and wells,

and is dominated by the beneficent Lebanons above, to whose rain and mists her water supply is due.

68. "If any one wishes to be rich, let him go north; if he wants to be wise, let him come south," said the proud rabbis at Jerusalem. "Can any good come out of Nazareth?" questioned the Judeans. The narrowness and bigotry of the Judeans was not possible in the Galileans. Where the Judeans lived, upon their stony plateau, they were isolated from the rest of the world, as we have seen; Galilean territory was crossed by one of the world's great highways which connected the Euphrates with the Nile, the far East and Damascus with the Mediterranean; and the people of Galilee had as neighbors the Phenicians on the west, with their Greek culture, their mines and manufactures and open ports, and the people east of the Jordan with the forums and amphitheaters and gay life of their Greek cities.

69. In Christ's time there were many Gentiles—Phenicians, Syrians, Arabs, and Greeks—in Galilee itself, especially in the cities along the great highways. "Galilee of the Gentiles" it had been called until a century before Christ's birth. The few Jews that settled in Galilee after the return from Babylon were all brought to Judea for safety by Simon Maccabeus, and not till John Hyrcanus (135-105 B. C.) extended the Jewish domains could Jews return to Galilee in great numbers.

70. **Perea.** The Yarmuk River divided the district east of the Jordan. North of that river lay the Tetrarchy of Philip; south, the province of Perea, which, together with Galilee, formed the Tetrarchy of Herod Antipas.

71. Perea is the Greek translation of the Hebrew *Eber,* meaning Beyond. Perea was beyond the Jordan. The word itself does not occur in the Gospels. Mark (10.1) calls it "Judea by the farther side of Jordan." It was a barren, thinly-populated district.

72. North of the Jabbok River was the Decapolis, a famous league of ten Greek cities which was not wholly independent of the ruler of the province. Each city governed considerable surrounding territory. The country around Gadara, for instance, was called the country of the Gadarenes. Scythopolis was the only city of the League west of the Jordan.

73. **The Tetrarchy of Philip.** The northern province east of the Jordan was called Bashan in Old Testament times. Luke (3.1) calls it "Iturea and the region of Trachonitis." This province has little connection with the Gospel narratives. Judea, Galilee and Perea were the only divisions of Palestine considered by the Jews as Jewish territory.

THE GREAT HIGHWAYS

74. **A Few Great Roads.** In the time of Christ there were a few great paved roads, some of them supposed to have been made in the time of Solomon.

75. The highway from Phenicia to Egypt lay along the Maritime Plain. From Tyre and from Ptolemais roads ran to Damascus, from a point southeast of Carmel an important road branched off which crossed the Plain of Esdraelon to Bethshan and then went northeastward, and from Joppa roads ran to the Sea of Galilee and to Jerusalem.

76. A Roman paved highway connected Galilee with Judea. The Jews avoided this road because it crossed Samaria. Jesus traversed it, as mentioned in Luke 9.52; 17.11; John 4.4. South of Jerusalem a road led by way of Bethlehem to Hebron and then westward to Gaza, where it met the road from Egypt. The Jews who would not cross Samaria went from Jerusalem by way of Jericho to the Jordan, crossed the river, and proceeded northward up the eastern side of the river till they recrossed it south of the Sea of Galilee.

77. East of the Jordan a road led directly south from Damascus to the Red Sea.

78. The *Via Maris,* the Way to the Sea, was a famous Roman paved road, one of the great commercial roads of the world. It connected the East with the West, Damascus with Rome. From Damascus the road led to the Jordan, which it crossed by the Bridge of the Sons of Jacob above the Sea of Galilee, and wound around the lake past Capernaum and Tiberias, and then on to the Sea at Ptolemais.

79. Roads which were but narrow bridle-paths crossed the country in all directions.

80. **The Fords of the Jordan.** The Jordan was fordable in many places, and ferry boats crossed at a few points, as at Bethabara, where there were no high cliffs on either side. The only bridge was that called the Bridge of the Sons of Jacob, built by the Romans south of Lake Huleh.

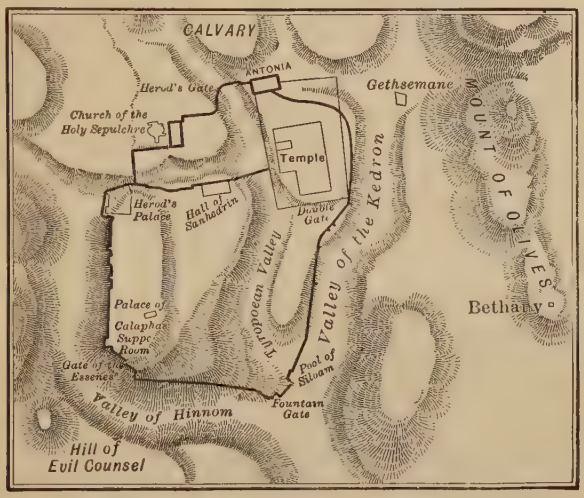
THE CITIES OF PALESTINE

81. The Cities of Judea. Upon almost every hill top in Judea a village was built. The important cities mentioned in the Gospels were Jerusalem, Bethany, Bethlehem, Ephraim, and Emmaus on the high tableland, and Jericho in the Jordan Valley.

82. Fifteen miles west of the northern end of the Dead Sea is located **Jerusalem,** the City of David, the Holy City. It was the capital of Judea and the center of the religious authority and worship of Palestine. In Genesis, 14.18 the place was called Salem. The meaning of the word Jerusalem is uncertain. Jewish tradition accounts for it in this way: Abraham called it Jireh and Shem called it Salem, and to please both it was called by the two names in one.

83. Ravines surround the city on all sides except on the north. It did not cover more than three hundred and thirty acres, including thirty acres of the temple area. South of the central part of the city the

city wall juts inward and leaves an oblong space outside. In this space is the Pool of Siloam, where Jesus healed the man born blind. The plain south of this spot is the union of three valleys which radiate northward. (1) The eastern valley is the Valley of the Kedron (called also the Valley of Jehoshaphat). It curves around the eastern part of the city and separates it from the Mount of Olives. (2) The central valley is the Valley of the Tyropœan (a word meaning cheese makers). It curves through the city in the shape of the new moon, says Josephus, and divides the lower part into an eastern and a western section. (3) The western valley is the Valley of Hinnom, or Gihon. It separates the city from the Hill of Evil Counsel, a name given to the summit of the range



Jerusalem in the Time of Christ

which curves around the southwestern part of the city, because tradition says that here the plot to betray Jesus was formed.

84. The topography of Jerusalem in the time of Christ can not be given conclusively, for the city has been rebuilt so often, the hills lowered and the valleys filled in by débris, that it can not be determined from its present appearance, nor do authorities agree as to the biblical statements and the traditional views of localities. Recent scholarship is divided, for instance, upon the question whether the stronghold of Mount Zion was west or east of the Tyropœan Valley.

85. The traditional view of Jerusalem at the time we are studying is as follows: West of the Tyropœan Valley was Mount Zion, the highest of the hills, upon which the greater part of the city was built.

This is called the Upper City by Josephus. East of the Tyropœan Valley was Mount Moriah, and south and almost a part of it was the lower hill of Ophel. North and northwest of Mount Moriah were the smaller hills of Bezetha and Acra.

86. Upon Mount Moriah was the temple. Upon Mount Zion were Herod's Palace, to which Jesus was sent by Pilate (probably on the northern part of the hill); Pilate's Pretorium, on the northwestern corner, where now stands the Tower of David (some claim the site of the Tower of Antonia, north of the temple); the High Priest's house, where Jesus was brought before Annas and Caiaphas; and the Supper-Room (the scene of the Last Supper). The traditional site of Golgotha is under the present Church of the Holy Sepulchre, north of Pilate's Pretorium, but most modern scholars have accepted as the site a rounded knoll outside the city wall near the point where the Damascus road leading northward is crossed by another road running northwest and southeast.

87. Jesus was presented in the Temple as an infant, and He made His first visit to Jerusalem as a boy of twelve. In April 27 occurred His first cleansing of the Temple and His discourse with Nicodemus. In April 28 He healed the infirm man in Jerusalem, and in October of that year went again to Jerusalem to attend the Feast of Tabernacles, where He uttered His discourses upon the Light of the World and Spiritual Freedom, and the Jews attempted to stone Him. Again in December He visited Jerusalem, and healed the man born blind. He attended the Feast of Dedication there that year, and did not return again till He made His triumphal entry in April 2, 30. Jerusalem is the scene of the events of Passion Week. After His resurrection He appeared to His disciples at Jerusalem, and His ascension was from the Mount of Olives.

88. **Bethany** (House of Dates) is two miles from Jerusalem on the southeastern slope of the Mount of Olives. Two roads connect the two places. The lower road winds around the southern slope of the Mount of Olives; the upper road is steep and passes the traditional site of the Garden of Gethsemane. The modern name for Bethany is el-Azariyah, the Arab form of Lazarus. Bethany was the home of Lazarus and Mary and Martha. Here Jesus visited them (Luke 10.38-42), here He afterward raised Lazarus from the dead, here He was anointed by Mary, and here He spent the nights of Passion Week before His arrest.

89. Near Bethany was **Bethphage,** whose site has never been identified. Some scholars think the word Bethphage refers to a district rather than a city.

90. **Bethlehem** is six miles south of Jerusalem, and three hundred feet higher. It was "little among the thousands of Judah," but it was noted as the birthplace of Boaz and Naomi, the place where Ruth and Boaz were married, and the birthplace of David, the King. It is famous

PALESTINE
IN THE TIME OF
CHRIST
SCALE OF MILES
0 5 10 20 30 40
PHOENICIA
Lebanon Mts.
Sidon
Sarepta
Tyr
Litany R.
Jordan R.
Mt. Hermon
Abana R.
Damascus
ABILENE
Cesarea Philippi
Dan
L. Huleh
PHILIPPI
TETRARCHY OF
TRACHONITIS
GAULANITIS
UPPER GALILEE
Ptolemais
Chorazin
Capernaum
Bethsaida
Julias
Magdala
Gergesa
Kurn Hattin
Sea of Galilee
Cana
Tiberias
Tarichaea
Hippos
Mt. Carmel
Kishon
GALILEE
Nazareth
Mt. Tabor
Yarmuk R.
Gadara
DECAPOLIS
LOWER GALILEE
Nain
Mt. Gilboa
Scythopolis (Bethsh.)
Cesarea
Bethabara
SAMARIA
Samaria
Mt. Ebal
Shechem
Sychar
Mt. Gerizim
Jordan R.
Jabbok R.
Mt. Gilead
Antipatris
Joppa
Shiloh
Arimathea
Lydda
Bethel
Ephraim
Philadelphia
Jamnia
Jericho
Emmaus
Mt. of Olives
JERUSALEM
Bethany
Ashdod (Azotus)
Ashkelon
Bethlehem
Mt. Nebo
JUDEA
Hebron
Machaerus
Gaza
Engedi
Arnon R.
Wilderness of Judea
DEAD SEA
PROVINCE OF JUDEA
Beersheba
L.L. POATES ENGRG CO., N.Y.
34 30′
35°
35 30′
36
Longitude East from Greenwich

above all cities because here Jesus was born. In one of the natural caves beneath the present Church of the Nativity is a silver star in the pavement, which bears the inscription *"Hic de Virgine Maria Jesus Christus Natus Est"* (Here Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary). While the Gospel account does not say that Jesus was born in a cave, yet we know that caves then as now were used as stables, and it may have been in a cave similar to the Cave of the Nativity that Jesus was born.

91. The Hebrew name, Beth Lehem, meant the House of Bread, a name given, no doubt, because of the fertility of the surrounding region. Now it is called Beit Lahm, the House of Meat, and is one of the most prosperous villages in Palestine, having eight or nine thousand people.

92. **Ephraim,** thirteen miles northeast of Jerusalem and thirteen miles west of the Jordan, was the place to which Jesus retired after the raising of Lazarus (John 11.54).

93. Three sites are claimed for the city of **Emmaus.** It was a few miles west of Jerusalem on the road from Jerusalem to Joppa. The two disciples were on their way to Emmaus when the risen Christ joined them (Luke 24.13).

94. Twenty miles south of Jerusalem is **Hebron,** one of the oldest cities in the world. Mary, the mother of Jesus, visited Elizabeth at Hebron. Here John the Baptist was born.

95. **Jericho** was about eighteen miles northeast of Jerusalem, five miles west of the Jordan and five miles north of the Dead Sea. The Gospels always speak of going down to Jericho, for it is more than three thousand feet below Jerusalem. The siege and taking of Jericho is one of the interesting accounts of the Old Testament. Palm trees surround the city on all sides, and it has been called "the City of Palms" and "The City of Perfumes." Antony presented to Cleopatra the balsam gardens, and Herod the Great bought them from her. Herod made this one of his royal cities, and here he died. Zaccheus lived at Jericho. On the road to Jericho is located the scene of the Good Samaritan.

96. **Gaza** is in the southwestern part of Judea, three miles from the sea. It has always been an important place because it was the last halting place for caravans before entering the desert on the road to Egypt.

97. **Joppa** (now Jaffa) was the seaport of Palestine. It can not properly be called a port, for ships are obliged to stay far out at sea and land passengers and freight from small boats. When Solomon's Temple was being built, the cedars from Lebanon were brought in rafts to Joppa. Here Peter had his vision.

98. **Lydda** is nine miles from Joppa, on the road between that city and Jerusalem. Jesus never visited any of these towns of the Maritime Plain.

99. The Cities of Samaria. **Samaria,** the capital, gave its name to the province. It is built upon an isolated hill midway between the Jordan and the Sea. Mountains surround it on three sides, but on the north it is open to the sea, which is visible beyond the low range of hills eight miles away. Herod the Great changed its name to Sabaste, the Greek for Augusta. He fortified the town, and built a temple to Cæsar Augustus where there had been a temple to Baal. Here he married Mariamne, and here he killed her and her two sons. Ruins of magnificent colonnades and gateways remain at the present day.

100. **Shechem,** about eight miles southeast of Samaria, was "the chief city of the Samaritans."

101. **Sychar** was two miles east of Shechem, at the foot of Mount Gerizim. Here Jesus had His conversation with the woman of Samaria. It is the only place in Samaria often visited by tourists, who come to see the fountain, now a shallow pool in the middle of a field.

102. Herod the Great spent twelve years in building the sea-coast town of **Cæsarea.** He made a harbor by dropping immense stones into twenty fathoms of water, and constructing a breakwater two hundred feet wide. It was the Roman capital of Judea, for here Pontius Pilate, the procurator, lived.

103. The Cities of Galilee. How often we read in the Gospel records about the cities and villages of Galilee! Josephus, who is generally credited with exaggeration, speaks of two hundred and forty towns and villages each having not fewer than fifteen hundred inhabitants.

104. In the time of Christ the Sea of Galilee must have been girdled with prosperous cities. There were said to have been nine large cities: now there is one city (Tiberias) and a few miserable hamlets. No other region in all Palestine is so intimately associated with the life of Jesus. Everywhere about the lake we can trace His footsteps, but it was the northwestern shore that He traversed most often, the district between Bethsaida on the further side of the Jordan and Magdala, at the point where the lake is widest.

105. Upon three cities here, Bethsaida, Chorazin, and Capernaum, Jesus pronounced His woes, because in them most of His mighty works had been done, and they repented not. (Mark 11.20-24; Luke 10.12-15.) The site of each city is disputed. Some authorities think that there were two Bethsaidas, one on the northeast, a short distance above the lake (in the Tetrarchy of Philip), called Bethsaida Julias, and the other, the city of Andrew and Peter, on the western shore.

106. A heap of ruins at Kerazah among the hills probably marks the site of **Chorazin,** two miles north of Capernaum.

107. We know from the Gospels that **Capernaum** was on the shore of the lake, and on or near the Plain of Gennesaret. Two sites, two or three miles apart — Khan Minyeh and Tell Hum — are claimed for Capernaum.

108. There was a Roman garrison at Capernaum, under the command of a centurion. Jerusalem alone surpassed Capernaum as a gathering place for all peoples, for travelers passed through it on their way from Damascus and the Euphrates to the coast, to Jerusalem, and to Egypt.

109. Peter and Andrew settled in this city, and Jesus made it His home after His rejection at Nazareth. It was "His own city." (Matt. 4.13; 9.1.) It was the scene of many of His miracles. Here the nobleman's son was healed. Near Capernaum occurred the miraculous draught of fishes, when Jesus called the four fishermen to be His disciples. In the synagogue the demoniac was restored. Here the mother of Peter's wife was cured, and "multitudes came to Him to be healed of their diseases." The paralytic was let down through the roof at the feet of Jesus and restored to strength. Matthew was called from his tax-gathering to be a disciple. From here the centurion's servant was healed. Here Jesus was anointed by the woman that was a sinner. He cured another demoniac here, raised to life the daughter of Jairus, and gave His discourse about the Bread of Life. The contest with the Pharisees about eating with unwashed hands occurred here, the piece of money for the temple tax was secured, the lesson of humility with a little child for a text and the duty of forgiveness were taught.

110. **Magdala** (now El-Mejdel) famous as the home of Mary Magdalene, was a place of wealth, a "city of dyers."

111. **Tiberias,** six miles south of Capernaum and six miles from the southern end of the lake, was made the capital of Galilee by Herod Antipas. He entirely rebuilt the city, naming it in honor of the Emperor Tiberius, and erected a castle, temple, theaters, and other magnificent buildings and beautiful villas, all in great contrast to the humble fishermen's homes in other towns about the lake. Because it was built upon the site of an ancient burial place, no Jew would willingly live there, although Herod gave him land free and exempted him from taxation. The hot springs here were widely celebrated. We have no record of Christ's visiting Tiberias. (John 6.23.)

112. "Amid the sowing and the reaping, the fishing and mending of nets, the journeying to and fro upon foot, all the simple habits of the native life of the Sea of Galilee," says Doctor George Adam Smith, "do we not catch some shadow of that other world, which had grown up around it, in the crowds that are said to grind on one another in the narrow lanes, like corn between millstones (Mark 5.24); in the figures of the centurion, the publican, and the demoniac crying that his name was legion; in the stories of the pulling down of barns and building of greater; of opulent householders leaving their well-appointed villas for a time with every servant in his place and the porter set to watch; of market-places and streets, as well as lanes; in the comparison of the towns on the lake to great cities—Sodom and Gomorrah, Tyre and Sidon and Nineveh; in the mention of the sins of a city (Luke 7.37) and of

Mammon and all the things after which the Gentiles seek, and in the acknowledgment that Galilee was the place where a man might gain the whole world (Luke 9.25)."

113. The important cities in the hill country of Galilee were Nazareth, Cana, Nain. **Nazareth** (now En-Nazirah) was eighteen miles west of the Sea of Galilee. A glance at the map shows that it is on a line with the lower end of the lake, while Jerusalem was on a line with the upper end of the Dead Sea, the two cities being as far apart as the length of the River Jordan, sixty-six miles. Nazareth lies in an elevated basin (two thousand eight hundred feet above the Mediterranean) surrounded by fifteen hills, "like a rose enclosed in its petals," says an ancient writer, and the houses climb up the hillsides.

114. From Nazareth Mary and Joseph went to Jerusalem to be taxed, and to Nazareth they returned with Jesus after the flight into Egypt. This was the home of Jesus till the beginning of His public ministry, when He left Nazareth for Capernaum. In the winter of A. D. 28 in the synagogue here Christ declared Himself the fulfilment of prophecy, so enraging the people that they led Him to the hill above the city and sought to cast Him down. A year later His second rejection at Nazareth occurred.

115. "The prospect from the hill above and at the back of Nazareth commands at once the Plain of Esdraelon and the sweep of northern Galilee, ending in Antilibanus and Hermon," says Doctor Sanday. "I do not think that my experience includes a view so *speaking* as this. There is no spot in Palestine that so suggests a Gospel cradled among the quiet hills, but carried out from thence over the habitable world." "For the harmonious development of a thoughtful mind it is necessary both to come in view of the world and to retire from it into meditation at will," says Doctor Ramsay in an article in the *Sunday School Times* on why Nazareth was chosen as Christ's home. "Nazareth was a suitable place. Though so close to the busy paths of commerce and of war, it was also quite out of sight of them. It was like a hermitage near a great city. One could pass in a few minutes into view of the world, and retreat again deep down into the quiet retirement of the little town in its hollow. As a recent tourist says, 'Surely in the bosom of the Nazarene hills repose may be had, if anywhere.'"

116. Opinions differ as to which of two modern places is the probable site of **Cana**—one three and a half miles northeast, the other eight miles north of Nazareth. Cana was the birthplace of Nathanael, and is famous as the place where Jesus wrought His first miracle, the changing of water into wine. Jesus was at Cana when sought by the nobleman, whose son was ill at Capernaum. (John 4.46-54.)

117. **Nain** was south of Nazareth near the base of Little Hermon. Here Jesus restored the widow's son to life. Almost the only remains of antiquity here now are the rock-cut tombs.

118. Cities in the Tetrarchy of Philip. Twelve miles north of Lake Huleh and then five miles eastward upon one of the southern spurs of Mount Hermon was **Cæsarea Philippi.** It was the most northerly city of the Holy Land in the time of Christ, very near the site of Dan of the Old Testament times. The Greeks had dedicated here a grove and a grotto to Pan, their god of the shepherds, and they named the town which grew up here Paneas. This name survives in its modern name, Banias. Herod the Great built a temple here of white marble in honor of Cæsar Augustus. His son Philip the Tetrarch enlarged the town and changed its name to Cæsarea. The name of Philippi was added to honor the tetrarch and to distinguish the town from Cæsarea on the coast. From one of the largest springs in the world in the grotto flows the River Banias, one of the sources of the Jordan.

119. Cæsarea Philippi is the northernmost limit of Christ's journeys. He came to this Gentile region to escape Jewish hostility, and here His disciples first clearly recognized and acknowledged His divinity. From here He "set His face steadfastly toward Jerusalem."

120. **Gerasa,** on the Sea of Galilee, was the scene of the healing of the demoniac. A short distance south of this place is a steep bluff which descends abruptly to the lake, probably the place where the herd of swine rushed into the lake.

121. The Cities of Perea. **Gadara,** six miles south of the Sea of Galilee, is the only one of the confederation of ten towns, the Decapolis, mentioned in connection with the life of Christ. Josephus says that it was the strongest city in Perea. Upon the heights above the city were beautiful villas.

122. **Bethabara beyond Jordan** is in the Revised Version translated Bethany beyond Jordan. On old maps this is located nearly opposite Jericho, but recent scholarship locates it about fifteen miles south of the Sea of Galilee, east of the Jordan. Here was the scene of Christ's baptism. After His temptation He again came to Bethabara and met His first disciples.

123. **Machaerus** was in the southern part of Perea, five miles from the Dead Sea. Herod Antipas rebuilt the fortress at Machaerus, and in the dungeon beneath the royal palace he imprisoned John the Baptist, and afterwards caused him to be beheaded. In this region Moses and John, many centuries apart, ended their earthly lives.

124. Cities of Phenicia. Though not a part of Palestine, the two Phenician cities of **Tyre** and **Sidon** on the coast are connected with the Gospel narratives. At the time of Christ they were included in the Roman province of Syria. Tyre was about thirty-five miles northwest of the Sea of Galilee and Sidon twenty-five miles farther north. Both cities were noted for their commerce, their wealth, and their luxury. In the summer of A. D. 29 Jesus went upon His northward journey into the region of Tyre and Sidon, and there met the Syrophenician woman.